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# DIVINE M E D I T A T I O N S

Upon Several Occasions:

WITH A

DAILY DIRECTORY.

BY

SIR WILLIAM WALLER, KNIGHT.

ANN. DOM. 1690.

---

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF SIR WILLIAM WALLER AND HIS  
TIMES, CHIEFLY EXTRACTED FROM A M.S.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF,

OF WHICH A FEW COPIES ONLY WERE PUBLISHED IN 1793.

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LONDON:

HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO.  
R. SUNTER, YORK.

1839.

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## DEDICATION.

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TO

MRS. CHARLES HOWARD.

IF my efforts to obtain a single copy of these excellent "Meditations," beyond that which was given to you by your maternal Uncle Lieut. General WALLER, had been successful, I should not have caused the good work of an ancestor of his to have been reprinted. The failure of those efforts has proved to me that "Sir WILLIAM WALLER'S MEDITATIONS" are lost to the public—and that his name is now only remembered as a leading General in Cromwell's army.

The forcible, the scriptural language, in which these religious sentiments are expressed, evinces the vigour of the mind, and the piety of the heart which dictated them. The style is the best style of the period in which they were written—and perhaps not less interesting because now obsolete. On this account, not a word has been changed, even the orthography is unaltered.

I hope many may read them with advantage, and concur in opinion with myself, that they are too valuable to fall into oblivion. If I am mistaken in my estimate, I shall yet be well satisfied if you have a pleasure in accepting them.

This edition is dedicated to you, my dear MARY, and to our Children, by

Your affectionate Husband,  
C. H.

MELBOURNE,  
*5th July, 1836.*

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M E M O I R  
OF  
SIR WILLIAM WALLER

And His Times.

---

SIR WILLIAM WALLER, the author of the "Meditations," was a man of a very ancient and renowned family, lineally descended from *Allured de Waller*, of Newark, in the County of Nottingham, who died in 1183.

*David de Waller*, Master of the Rolls to King Edward the Third, for thirty years, died issueless, but from his only brother, *Henry Waller*, sprang *George Waller*, of Groombridge, in the County of

Kent, the father of *Richard Waller*, a gallant participator in the glories of Agincourt; who, in honor of having made prisoner of the Duke of Orleans in that memorable conflict, obtained from Henry the Fifth the addition to his crest of a shield of the arms of the Duke, pendant from the sinister side of a wallnut tree, which his descendants have ever since borne. The French Prince having been brought to England, was placed under the care of his captor, at his seat at Groombridge.

*John Waller*, of Groombridge, grandson of the above, died in 1517, leaving two sons. The elder, (William,) succeeded to the Groombridge Estate; the younger, (John,) settled at Beaconsfield, and was the grandfather of Edmund Waller, the celebrated Poet.

*William Waller*, Esquire, of Groombridge, (the elder brother of John of Beaconsfield,) was succeeded by his grandson, *Sir Walter Waller*, Knight, of Groom-

bridge, who left two sons by his second wife, Mary, daughter of Richard Hardress, Esquire ; namely, *George Waller*, of Groombridge, whose son and heir was a Major-General in the Parliament Army against King Charles the First—and, *Sir Thomas Waller*, of Speldhurst, in the County of Kent, Knight, Constable of Dover Castle, in the reign of King James the First ; who married Margaret, daughter of Lord Dacre, by whom he had a son, *William*, the subject of the present memoir.

William Waller was born about the ✓ year 1600. He was sent at an early age to Magdalen College, in the University of Oxford ; but his education was afterward completed in Paris. He commenced his military career in the service of the confederate princes against the Emperor of Germany, in which he acquired the reputation of a good soldier, and upon his return home was knighted. He was thrice married—first to Jane, daughter and heiress

of Sir Richard Reynell, of Ford, in Devonshire. Lady Waller died, 18th May, 1633, at Bath, and was buried in the Abbey Church there. A monument still exists, bearing the following inscription:—

TO THE DEARE MEMORY  
OF THE RIGHT VIRTUOUS AND WORTHY LADY,  
JANE LADY WALLER,  
SOLE DAUGHTER AND HEIRE TO SIR RICHARD REYNELL,  
WIFE OF SIR WILLIAM WALLER, KT.

---

Sole issue of a matchless paire,  
Both of their state and virtues were  
In graces great—in stature small,  
As full of spirit; as void of gall.  
Cheerfully grave—bounteously close,  
Holy, without vain-glorious showes;  
Happy, and yet from envy free,  
Learned without pride—witty yet wise;  
Reader, this riddle read with me,—  
Here, the good Lady Waller lies.

The only issue from this union was one daughter, afterwards married to Sir William Courtenay, of Powderham Castle, ancestor of Lord Courtenay.

Sir William married secondly, Lady Anne Finch, the daughter of the first Earl of Winchelsea, by whom he had one son, William; who afterwards became an active magistrate for the County of Middlesex, and a strenuous approver of the measures of King Charles the Second's government: and one daughter, Anne, married to Sir Phillip Harcourt.

Some years after the death of Lady Anne, Sir William married for his third wife, Anne, the daughter of William, Lord Paget, and the widow of Sir Simon Harcourt. This lady had one son by her first marriage, Sir Phillip Harcourt; who married the daughter of Sir William Waller and Lady Anne Finch; from which marriage the present Earl of Harcourt is descended.

Sir William was elected a member of the Long Parliament for Andover; and having imbibed, in the course of his foreign service, early and warm prejudices in favor

of the Presbyterian discipline, he became (as many good men then were) a decided opponent of the Court; and having distinguished himself by his first military exploits, after the Parliamentary war commenced, was considered as a man prepared to go all lengths that the most furious reformers could propose, and on that account extolled by many as a General to be set in opposition to the Earl of Essex. In this his character was mistaken; conscientiously opposed to the arbitrary measures of Charles the First, and a determined supporter of the constitutional privileges of Parliament and the liberties of Britons, he was no less a foe to the anarchy and despotism of usurpation, gained by military power, and supported by brute force. His anxious desire was to repair the Government and the Constitution, not to overthrow it. Whilst he was employed under the Earl of Essex, he was deputed to the command of the expedition against Ports-

mouth. In this exploit he conducted himself with ability and diligence that would have done justice to any cause ; and having reduced the garrison in a shorter time, and upon better terms, than could possibly have been expected, his success procured him the conduct of several other expeditions ; in all of which, by the great celerity with which he performed his marches, and by his uniform success, he acquired the brilliant title of William the Conqueror.

After many signal advantages, however, he sustained some defeats by the King's forces ; particularly at Roundway Down, near Devizes, and at Cropredy bridge, in Oxfordshire. The blame on each occasion, was thrown by him on the jealousy of other officers ; and neither the spirit nor the judgment of his own operations were ever questioned. The Independants, who were now becoming the strongest party, both in the Parliament and in the Army,

wished him to continue one of their Generals, but upon terms which neither his conscience nor his sense of military honour could allow him to comply with.

By the famous self-denying ordinance of Cromwell he had been laid aside as a Commander; but still preserved so great an influence and reputation in the army, as to render him a very formidable opponent to the rising party. He was thenceforward considered as a leader of the Presbyterians against the designs of the Independents. He was one of the eleven members of parliament impeached of high treason by the army. This compelled him to withdraw for some time, but he afterwards resumed his seat in the House of Commons; until, in 1648, with fifty other members, he was expelled by the Parliament, and all of them were committed to different prisons on suspicion of attachment to the Royal cause. In August, 1658, he was committed to custody on

suspicion of being engaged in Sir George Booth's insurrection ; but in November following, he was released upon bail. In February, 1659, he was nominated one of the Council of State, and was elected as a representative for Middlesex, in the Parliament which began 25th April, 1660. He died at Osterby Park, in Middlesex, ✓ 19th September, 1669, and was buried in the Chapel in Tothill-street, Westminster.

In the turmoils of the war the character of Sir William Waller never deviated from that gallant courtesy which distinguished the gentlemen of that age, and has ever been the characteristic of an English officer.

It does not appear that he published any literary work during his life. His "Divine Meditations and Daily Directory," were not printed until twelve years after his death. In 1793, "*A Vindication of the character and conduct of Sir William Waller, Knight, Commander-in-Chief of*

*the Forces in the West, explanatory of his conduct in taking up arms against King Charles the First, written by himself, and now first published from the original manuscript,"* was printed by Dobrell in one large octavo volume. This MS. had been preserved by one of the noble families descended from him. It appears to have been written with great sincerity, as well as precision ; and contains many interesting particulars relative to the democratical parties which struggled for superiority after the King had fallen into their power. Sir William expresses the strongest veneration for the constitution of his country ; he avows himself a sincere friend to the British form of government, consisting of King, Lords, and Commons. His words are—“It was a government, for majesty, “beauty, and order, comparable not only to “the best forms that ever were practised, “but to the best ideas that ever were “fancied. A democratical, aristocratical

“monarchy, so excellently well proportioned and contempered as it were *ad pondus*, that the King could not say to “the Lords, I have no need of you; nor “the Lords to the Commons, we have no “need of you; but all were fitly joined together and compacted by that which every “one supplied. But it is a melancholique “thing to remember how happy we were. I “always look’d upon those ties that bound “mee to the maintenance of monarchy, as “likewise knitting my heart, and affections “and endeavours, to the preservation and “defence of his late Majesty, his person, “crown and dignity, against all attempts, “and conspiracies whatsoever. And though “my engagements may seem to have “cross’d and interfered with this profession; yet I can safely speak it, as in His “presence, who is the Searcher of all hearts, “who is my witness, and will be my Judge; “that in the greatest animosity and heat of “the war, my soul never harboured a

“ thought to the prejudice of his Majesty’s  
“ person, or the diminution of his just power  
“ and greatness ; and that I would sooner  
“ have perished ten thousand times, than  
“ to have touched the lapp of his garment,  
“ otherwise, than with honour. All the ends  
“ I had in the carrying on of that service,  
“ were but to bring things to a fair and  
“ peaceable issue ; that there might have  
“ been a general payment of all duties.  
“ That God might have had his fear ; the  
“ King his honour ; the Houses of Parlia-  
“ ment their privileges ; the people of the  
“ kingdom their liberties and properties :  
“ and nothing might have remained upon  
“ the score among us, but that debt which  
“ must be ever paying, and ever owing—  
“ love.

“ And therefore I utterly abhor and de-  
“ test that inhumane, impious proceeding  
“ against his late Majesty, as an act (con-  
“ sidering all circumstances,) not to be  
“ parallel’d in any story, since the world

“ begane. I should think that the earth  
“ should refuse to harbour those viperous  
“ creatures, that contrary to the faith of both  
“ kingdoms, and beyond all example, have  
“ presumed with wicked hands to seize upon  
“ and imprison his royal person, to try him  
“ without law, and to execute him without  
“ conscience, as a murtherer, before his own  
“ door, in the capital city of the king-  
“ dom: all this after he had granted, in  
“ the last treaty, more than any King  
“ ever granted to any Parliament, and more  
“ than any Parliament ever demanded of  
“ any King, and more than this Parliament,  
“ in the beginning thereof, could have  
“ thought or wish'd. Certainly the voyce  
“ of this blood crieth aloud unto God, from  
“ the earth, for vengeance; and there can-  
“ not but be a severe inquisition for it. It  
“ is true, because sentence is not executed  
“ speedily, therefore judgement may seem  
“ to wink, but it sleepeth not. I am verily  
“ persuaded there are some vapors, even

“ now in gathering, which howsoever they  
“ may appear at present, but as a little cloud  
“ out of the sea ; and the effects thereof  
“ may seem, by those interveniencies to be  
“ retarded and put off ; yet they will never  
“ leave working till they have vented them-  
“ selves with terror to the destruction of  
“ those regicides, and to the confusion of all  
“ those that have said, ‘ We have no King  
“ —what shall a King do unto us?’

“ I renounce, and absolutely disavow,  
“ whatsoever hath been acted, in order to  
“ exclude his Majesty that now is, from his  
“ imperial crown, as in itself illegal and null.  
“ And according to the tenor of my allegi-  
“ ance and covenant, I acknowledge his Ma-  
“ jesty to be the lawful King of this realme  
“ of England, and of all the kingdoms and  
“ dominions annexed thereunto, by a clear  
“ and individual right of succession, as next  
“ and immediate heir, without reference to  
“ any pretended Act or Proclamation in or  
“ under the name of the Commons of

“ England, in Parliament assembled, to the  
“ contrary notwithstanding. I look upon  
“ myself as obliged, beyond the possibility of  
“ any human dispensation, unto the defence  
“ of his Majesty’s person, honor, and estate,  
“ as farr as I am able to serve him; and ac-  
“ cording to the latitude of my covenant; in  
“ recognition and acknowledgment where-  
“ of, I call God, angels, and men, to be my  
“ witness: and upon the bended knees of  
“ my soul, I beseech God, to preserve his  
“ Majesty and to establish his throne; and  
“ to give him an hearing heart, as Solomon  
“ prayed for, whereby he may be inclined to  
“ give a gracious ear to sound and whole-  
“ som counsails; and be brought to such an  
“ happy agreement with his faithful people  
“ in all his kingdomes, as may put an end to  
“ these miserable distractions.

“ I like a reformation well, and as well  
“ as any man, but it must be such an one as  
“ may determine in edification and not in  
“ destruction. My affection to the Parlia-

“ ment (that is to the publique) was no  
“ morning dew; though the sun hath looked  
“ upon mee, and scorched mee to a degree  
“ of blackness; though I have suffered  
“ many ways in my estate, in my libertie,  
“ in my reputation; yet nothing hath been  
“ of force to exhale that.

“ It is not to be forgotten in the account  
“ of our unhappy distempers, that nothing  
“ putt the Houses of Parliament into a  
“ greater inflammation than that unhappy  
“ demand of the five members, made by the  
“ late King, in the House of Commons;  
“ which was interprited such an horrid vio-  
“ lation of privilege, as altho' his Majesty  
“ were pleased to withdraw the prosecuting  
“ it, and to promise a more tender respect  
“ for the time to come; yet, nevertheless,  
“ this sparke (as his Majesty terms it) kin-  
“ dled such flames of discontent, as gave  
“ occasion, first to the raising of guards, and  
“ afterwards to the levying of an army.—  
“ Have you not out-acted the King, above

“twenty for one? He demanded but five  
“members out of the House of Commons  
“and never took one; you have plucked two  
“out of the very House of Commons, im-  
“prisoned forty-five, and secluded ninety-  
“eight; and are so far from retracting what  
“you have don, that you are still opinion-  
“ate, and persist in your way, to the utter  
“subversion of both that and all future Par-  
“liaments. And do you think, who have  
“judged his Majesty, and yet do the same  
“things and infinitely worse, that you shall  
“escape the judgment of God?”

Entertaining sentiments of this nature, Sir William could not be otherwise than obnoxious to Oliver and his party; they feared the great influence which his high character for judgment, moderation, and integrity, gave him in the Parliament: they were anxious to drive him from it, and he thus naturally became an object of their persecution. He was indeed an ardent lover of the constitution of his

country, and it was the infringement of those rights that alone induced him to take arms in the defence of Parliament. The whole tenor of Sir William Waller's public life proved that he maintained those sentiments relative to the **CONSTITUTION OF BRITAIN**, which were afterwards so well expressed by Blackstone, in the conclusion of his *Commentaries* : “To sustain, to repair, to beautify this noble pile, is a charge intrusted principally to the nobility, and such gentlemen of the kingdom as are delegated by their country to Parliament. The protection of the **THE LIBERTY OF BRITAIN** is a duty which they owe to themselves who enjoy it; to their ancestors who transmitted it down; and to their posterity who will claim at their hands, this the best birthright, and the noblest inheritance of mankind.”

**Divine  
M E D I T A T I O N S**

UPON

**SEVERAL OCCASIONS:**

WITH A

**Daily Directory.**

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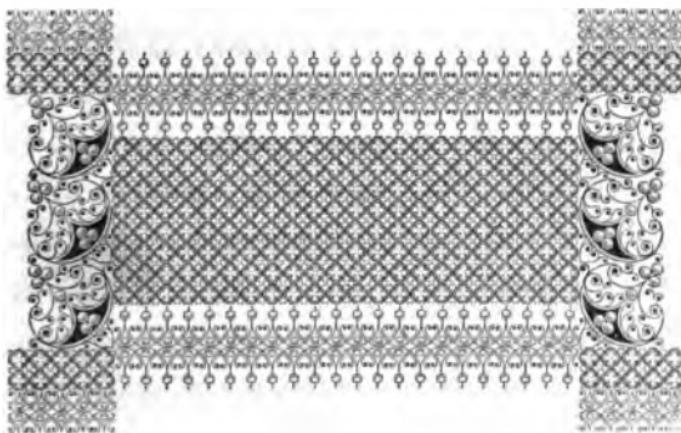
BY THE EXCELLENT PEN OF  
**SIR WILLIAM WALLER, KNT.**

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*LONDON:*

PRINTED BY B. GRIFFIN FOR BENJ. ALSOP, AT  
THE ANGEL AND BIBLE, OVER AGAINST THE  
STOCKS-MARKET. 1680.





THE  
P R E F A C E .

CHRISTIAN READER,—

*I will not draw the justice of this dedication into suspicion by a needless apology ; to enlarge on the beauty and excellency of these Meditations is a labour as vain as impossible. Vain ; for what accession will it make to the lustre of the sun, to light up our dim candle to paraphrase upon his glorious beams ? and impossible too ; for to commend below the dignity of the subject is an interpretative reproach : Modesty will not blush to say*

*of these papers, that in respect of the matter, they are all glorious within ; and in respect of the language, their clothing is of wrought gold : and gold needs no gilding ! 'Tis the great disparagement of authentick beauties to paint ; let vulgar faces owe their complexions to ceruss and vermillion ; such approved pieces of proportion are their own orators ; the diamond needs no foile to set off its beauty, and one taste of honey will more effectually recommend its sweetness than the most elaborate panegyrick.*

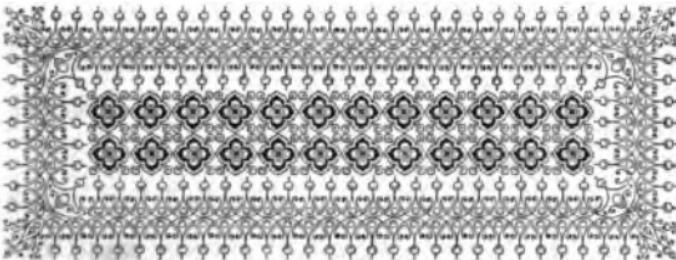
*The pious Author, being here placed in the shades of his privacy and retirements, sits in the most advantageous posture for an Artist to draw him to the life, which must have deluded his art were he represented in the glaring shine of outward glory ; but without his own pencil who shall dare to take his picture ? Let us then content ourselves that we have here a window into his breast through which we may observe the inward workings of his soul, which we conclude are therefore sincere, because*

*secret, God and his own conscience being only privy to them.*

*As we would not take the counterfeit of a friend, when inflamed with a feaver, emaciated with a consumption, or discomposed with passion ; but in his most regete and healthful habit, in his most sedate and composed hours, so do these Meditations represent the Author, not as engaged in the dust and sweat of action ; not as heated with the emotions and fermentations of valour, but as one sequestred from the noise, and bussle of a vexing world, when he was most himself, that is when most in the contemplation of the unseen world : the soul is then its own faithful mirror, when the contracted adventitious dust is wiped off ; as the sea is then the truest looking-glass when least ruffled with storms and tempests.*

*If he be justly famous to this day, who first taught the great Calvin to write and speak Latin, we need nothing more to evidence this pious Author's worth, than that one of the most mortified persons of this our age has profest that he learnt from*

him, the art of dying. *A lesson, which we are all the more concern'd to take out exactly, that we may not be to seek when the Soveraigne Arbitrator of our lives shall call us out to repeat it.* Once we must die; and whatever errors we commit in that work, we cannot return to review, correct, and amend them. 'Tis our interest, then, as well as our duty, to die every day, that we may not bungle at it, when we come to die at our last day: *In order to which great end the Author has bequeathed us these directions as a legacy, that we may die but once, and live for ever.* I shall add but one small thing more, that thou hast this coppy from his own hand, without the addition or subtraction of one word, one syllable, one letter; and in this his exactness, do centre the excellencies of the two great Poets, Virgil, and Ovid, to the former of whom, none could add, from the latter, none could steal the smallest particle, without apparent injury, to their digested raptures.  
Farewell !



# DIVINE MEDITATIONS

UPON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

---

## MEDITAT. I.

UPON MY AWAKING IN A DARK NIGHT.

L ORD, where am I? and in what world? how are all things about me (as they were in that *no world*, in that confused mass and chaos) swaddled up in bands of thick darkness? It is not without reason, that the most horrid things that we can imagine are represented by this black solitude; there being nothing of more contrariety to our nature, than the privation of light. If it be so uncomfortable to be in the dark, and to have no light, how dismal

must it be in a spiritual sense to be in the dark, and to have no trust? that is a darkness to be felt indeed!

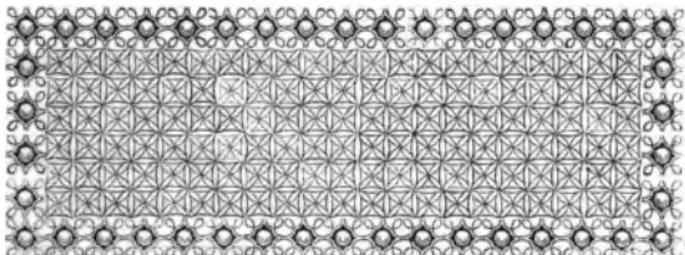
If this night were to continue but three dayes, like that in Egypt, I should think it a plague; how much more, if it were to be everlasting, would it be a hell to me, though there were no other torment to accompany it? How unconceivably miserable is the estate of those damned souls, that lie manacled and fettered *in chains of eternal darkness*, and are not only banished from the light of the sun, but, which is *the blackness of darkness*, shut out from the light of God's countenance, and adjudged to eternal pains? But what an idol am I in this condition? I have eyes and see not; all natural helps and parts are vain and useless, except the God of nature vouchsafe to actuate them, and to make them instrumental. O my soul! be not disquieted with this; what though I cannot see for the present? God hath made comforts, as he hath madelights, for the night as well as for the day. There are *songs in the night*, and my mouth may be open to shew forth the high praises of God, even when I am upon my bed, and mine eyes sealed

up in darkness. The sight of the eyes is not always pleasing! how many times have mine eyes *wounded my heart*, when they have seen what they would not have seen? nay, which is worse, how many times have they *corrupted my heart*, when they have seen what they should not have seen? At the best, various objects are but a distraction to the mind, and by raising vain desires, bring it to a needless indigency, inducing a want of many things, which we want not. There is a kind of innocence in seeing nothing!

It is a comfort, and an inestimable one, that in the want of the use of my bodily eyes, I have the benefit of a spiritual eye-sight; so that although I cannot see, as cats, and bats, and owls do, yet I can see as saints and angels see, no interpositions can hinder an intellectual prospect. Be it never so dark, I can, without the help of a candle, look into myself, and in the sense of my wants, look up to God, and find a clear lightsome passage through Jesus Christ, to the throne of his grace. But what do I say? I can? O my God! pardon the presumption of that language! of myself, as of myself, I can do nothing but sin!

I am darkness, there is a midnight within me, and I can only see, that I cannot see ! It were not only a blindness in me, but a remaining sin to boot, if I should say, I see. Who so blind, as they that are perfect ? It is *in thy light* alone, that *I see light !* Thy gracious illuminating eye, is mine eye sight !

Lord, let me ever enjoy the continuance of that aspect, and then in the darkest condition, though it were the shadow of death, I shall not be afraid of any terrors ; even *the night shall be light about me* ; or if it be not, it shall be light with me. *Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy will come in the morning* ; and in a morning that shall never see night ! In the mean time, O my God ! though I can see nothing here but darkness and obscurity, it is my safety, that *thou seest me* ; it is my happiness that I can see thee ! What can I wish for more in this world, then to be safe, and happy ? *Return again unto thy rest, O my soul ! for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee !*



## MEDITAT. II.

UPON THE SUN-RISING.

**T**RULY *the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun!* Look out, O my soul! and see a miracle, and no wonder. Behold that glorious *ruler of the day, as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,* deckt with beauty and excellency. If this great luminary had never shewed itself abroad till now, and were now to be seen, but as a rarity, this once ; with what a Persian adoration should we be ready to welcome it, and with what dejected countenances, should we bid it farewell? Now that we see it every day, we scarce take notice that we see it: once certain it is, that we heed it nothing so much as any unusual meteor, or fiery exhalation; so much more prone are we by nature to be taken

with new, than with worthy, if ordinary objects !

And yet, upon a just account, all things considered, God's ordinary works, which are established in a constant course, are more wonderful than those extraordinary miracles which we most admire : for the standing still of this sun at Joshua's arrest, was not in itself so stupendious, as the daily progress thereof, that, being so vast a body, as it is, it should in the compass of a few hours circulate the world : Lord give me a true sense and apprehension of thine *eternal Power and Godhead*; and of thine *invisible things*, in the *things that are made*, even for common use, and which thou hast distributed unto all nations under the cope of heaven ; that so, as all those works praise thee, in the determinate order of their services ; I may likewise constantly give thee praise for them ; not only because thou hast made them beautiful and excellent in their kinds, for thine own glory ; but because thou hast made them ordinary and common, for the good of all thy creatures !

How doth this morning light revive, and cherish all things, and give them as it were a

resurrection from the dead, and a new being ! But even now they were buried in obscurity, and before I can well recollect myself, they appear in their proper colours, and stand as a garment new made up. O thou *Sun of Righteousness* ! arise upon my soul *with healing in thy wings*, and scatter those shaddows of darkness that have so long benighted me ! Enlighten the eyes of my understanding, and so renew and quicken me by the influence of thy grace, that thy light may be a new life unto me ; that *I may live, yet not I, but thou that livest in me* !

That philosopher said truely, if the sun were wanting, it would be night for all the moon and stars ; for nothing but the sun can make it day. And it is as true in a spiritual consideration ; if it were not for Jesus Christ *the Light of the world*, notwithstanding all the illumination we can receive from reason and sense, we should be still in the dark ; and therefore some have observed, that our Saviour was born on the fourth day of the week, which was the same day of the week, wherein the sun was created ; as to shew that he was that *Sun of Righteousness*, and that *True Light*

*that lighteth every one that cometh into the world.*

What a general blessing is this beneficent planet? and how is the divine nature of God emblematically represented by it? It is good unto all; it riseth *on the evil, and on the good*; and without regard of persons, shineth upon the poor man's cottage, as well as upon the prince's palace, and *nothing is hid from the* influential *heat thereof!* Lord, this is a copy of that universal goodness, which is originally in thyself; but with this difference, that what the sun doth, as to the fomenting and cherishing of inferiour bodies, it doth it as a natural agent, necessarily, and insensibly; but what thou dost, is voluntarily and freely done, out of thine infinite love, and goodness to thy creatures. Thou art the Fountain of all blessing, and the God of all praise! Lord, work upon my corrupt nature by the influence of thy grace, that I may be conformed unto thee in the extension of mine affections unto all; in a way of doing good, not only to my neighbors, and such as love me, but to mine enemies, to those that *curse, hate, and despightfully use me*; that so I may approve myself a true

*child of my Father which is in heaven ; and be perfect, even as he is perfect.*

But yet this beneficence of the sun worketh not alike upon all ; those gracious beams that soften the wax, do but harden the clay ; and as they make the flowers smell the sweeter, so they operate no further upon the dunghill, then to make that the more fetide, and noysome. It is a sad thing to be hardened by mercies, and to be the worse for God's being good to us !

Though this sun-light be so pleasant to behold, yet it doth mine eyes no good to gaze upon it. If the lustre of a created light be so dazeling ; how unapproacheable must that divine light be wherein the great Creator dwelleth, the resplendency whereof is the light of light ? Content thyself, O my soul ! with that prospect thou hast had of God's goodness, so far as he hath been pleased to reveal himself unto thee, but do not presume to speculate into his glory, least thou be oppressed with it.

It is impossible to see this light, but by its own light : who ever beheld the sun, but by the light of the sun ? as impossible is it to see *the Father of lights*, but by the radiancy of the Son, who is *the brightness of his glory* ! or to

discern *the things of the Spirit* of God, otherwise than by the revelation of his Spirit ! *The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes*: we see it, and see by it. But what is become of all those heavenly tapers, those spangles of light, that did so lately adorne the skie ? How hath the lustre of this predominant light obscured, and darkened them ; It is in one sense, a sad exchange between the light of the sun, and the light of the moon and starrs ; that the sun, though it do open, and reveal the sight of the earthly things, yet it closeth, and shutteth up the prospect of the celestial globe, so that we cannot discerne the beauty, and variety of those heavenly bodies above us, as we may do in the night. It is the misery of prosperity, that as by reason of the brightness of that light wherewith it is environed, it giveth us a clear view of the glory of this world, and of all the vanities in it ; so withal it darkeneth, and concealeth divine things, and thereby indisposeth us to raise our affections unto them : And on the other side, it is the felicity of adversity, that although the aire about it be very obscure, yet therein we best discern God, and spiritual

things ; so Job in his affliction could say. *Now mine eye seeth thee*, of whom before he had only *heard, by the hearing of the ear*. Lord, thou knowest what condition is fittest for me, and I presume not to appoint thy wisdome, but so far as a poor beggar may be a chooser, I beseech thee rather to keep me in the dark, if through that vaile I may be admitted to see the light of thy countenance, then to suffer me to be dazeled with the lustre of this vain world, wherein there is nothing to be seen, but that which is nothing, and less then nothing ! Oh let me rather enjoy light in darkness, then live in darkness, when I am in the light !

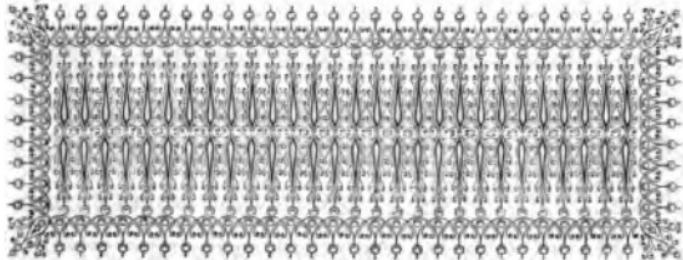
In the beginning, for the first three days of the creation week, there was no sun at all ; but yet there was light, and that light was universally diffused thorough all parts, untill it pleased God to contract it into one body. *O Lord ! thou alone doest great wonders ! how great are thy works ?* how great this work ? wherein thou didst, as I may say, create the effect, before the cause. Thou art not limited to the methods of our weak reason, but canst do every thing, *according to the council of*

*thine own will*, not only by, but without, and contrary to means ! There is no glorying, no trusting but in thee alone, unto whom all means, and more, are alike subservient !

As in the creation, during those first three dayes, God made, and continued the light, and then upon the fourth day, made that light a sun ; so in his order of proceeding with his children, he giveth them a three dayes light ; the first of nature, when he quickeneth them in their mother's womb, with a reasonable soul ; the second of grace, when he regenerateth them in the womb of his church, by his sanctifying Spirit ; the third of beatitude, in a state of bliss, when he receiveth their departed souls into his rest ; and then upon the fourth day, that is, at the general resurrection, when he reunites their souls, and bodies in glory, he gathereth this light into a sun, from which time they shall to all eternity shine forth, as the sun in the kingdome of their Father.

What a world will that be, when we shall have no sun again ! when we shall need none ! nay, when instead of one sun, there shall be more suns than there are stars in the firmament ! when every saint shall be a sun, and

yet all those saints, as if they were but so many stars, shall receive their light from another sun of infinite glory; from the glory of God, the Fountain of all light! that *light is sown here for the righteous*; O when will the harvest time come? Awake! awake! O my soul! and contemplate that happy time, whenssoever it shall come! It is some anticipation of it, to think upon it before it comes. Watch for the morning, *more than they that watch for the morning!* But, Lord, it is not *of him that watcheth*, no more than *of him that willeth*, but *of thee who shewest mercy!* O do thou, by the irradiation of thy grace, make such a clear day in my soul, as that I may not only see thy light here, and rejoice in it, and walk by it, but be it; so shall I be light in thee, and, according to that expression in thine own word, thou shalt then *walk in me! my path shall then be as the shining light*, and I shall *shine out more and more unto that full, clear and everlasting perfect day of thy glory!*



### MEDITAT. III.

UPON MY RISING OUT OF BED, AND PUTTING ON MY CLOTHES.

**S**LUGGISH soul, how long wilt thou lie lazing? What, *yet a little slumber?* yet, *a little folding of the hands?* Awake! *they that sleep, sleep in the night.* Do not fancy thyself to be among the antipodes, as if it were night with thee, when it is day with us. If thou wilt but open thy window, thou mayest with shame behold the sun already mounted above our horizon, and in his silent language seeming to reproach thee, that he hath travelled round about the world but yesterday, and yet is up before thee this morning! Let not sleep, like an unjust publican, exact more of thy time than is his due, and make thy dayes shorter than God hath made them. There is so much life gained, as is saved out of sleep!

Be not too secure in this condition ; whilst thou art drouzing, the devil is hunting ; and he hath a way to hunt souls with pillowes, and night-caps. Remember he is no sluggard, but will surely roste what he takes in hunting !

How strangely do those people live, that begin their morning at noone, and their noone at night ; that turn day into night, and live backward ? But it is no wonder to see owls fly abroad at late hours. O my soul ! God never created thee to live in a feather-bed ! life consists in action ; idleness is but a living death. And *what doth the Lord require of thee* ; not to lie still ; but to arise, and be doing ; *to walke* whilst thou hast light, *humbly with thy God*, and honestly with thy neighbour, as a *child of the day* !

Up then, my soul, and *cast off the workes of darkness* ; night clothes are not a fit weare for the day. He, whom thou lovest, calleth thee, do not say, *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on* ? but without delay, echo that call, with a *lo, I come, to do thy will* !

But where are my clothes ? O my God ! what a beggerly creature am I, that have nothing to put on, but what I am faine to borrow ! If it

were not for the supply which I receive from a poor worme, from a silly sheep, I could neither be fine, nor warme. By right *the borrower should be servant to the lender*; but Lord, thou hast given me dominion over these serviceable creditors. How should I at once be humbled under the sense of mine own indigence, and thankfully exalted in the apprehension of thy goodness to me! But what is man? nay, which is worse, what am I? surely I *am more brutish then any man*; more sottish then those brute creatures, unto whom I am so much indebted. They are not proud of those habiliments which they impart to me; I live upon their collections, and yet am apt to pride myself in this beggary. O my soul! this glorying is not good: what is it, but a glorying in shame? Nakedness was the original bravery of our first parents in Paradise, and shall be our last bravery in heaven, when we shall be in the angels' mode. Lord correct this depraved nature in me by thy grace, that I may no longer fashion myself according to my former lusts and vanities, but be conformed to that inward dress, which in thy sight is of greatest price; so though mine outside may be plain and bare, I shall be sure to be all glorious within.

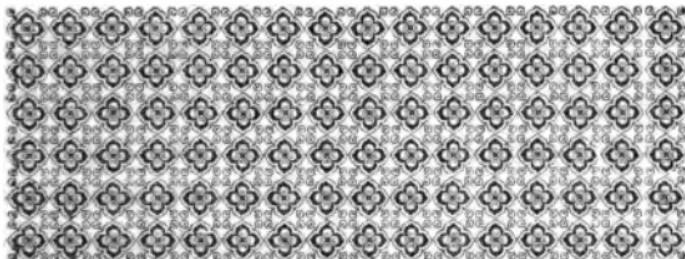
But yet, O my God ! thou knowest I have need of raiment, as well as of food, and other outward accommodations ; and thou art pleased to allow me a providential, though not a solicitous, care for what I shall put on. I beseech thee so to order my thoughts, that in the pursuit of these things, I may follow thy prescribed method of husbandry ; *first to seek thy kingdom, and thy righteousness*, and then in the use of good means to trust thee for the rest.

But in what a new case am I, when I am apparelled ? how warmed and comforted ! blessed be God, that I have not that curse upon me, mentioned in the prophecy of Haggai, to be *clothed and not warm*, those clothes cannot but do the good, that are lined with thy blessing !

It is the common opinion, that our clothes warm us ; but the truth is, we warm our clothes, and they do but keep us warm with our own heat. As it is in this, so it is in all earthly comforts, which have nothing of satisfaction in themselves, but that placency which we take to be in them, is but a resultance from our own minds, a warmth which we give them. Lord sanctifie these outward things unto me, that, in the fruition of them, I may so use them, as

not to abuse them, by looking for that in them, which is only to be found in thee. Thou art the blessing of all blessings ; from thee I have all, in thee I enjoy all, and without thee all is nothing.

O my God ! it is the desire of my soul to be dressed and fitted to wait upon thee in the way wherein thou wouldest have me to go, but I dare not think of coming into thy presence in an unseemly garment ; in the nasty rags of the old man ; and I have no other sute of mine own but that. Oh, do thou give that happy word of command, to have that filthy garment taken away from me ! and say unto my soul, *behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass away, and I will clothe thee with change of rayment.* I beseech thee furnish thy poor creature, out of thy divine wardrobe, with those graces that may most adorn my profession : above all vouchsafe to clothe me with the garment of mine elder Brother, that is *the best robe*, and under that covert grant me thy blessing : so what ever may befall me here, I shall be sure to rise in a happy hour at the last day ; when being clothed with his righteousness, I shall be clothed upon with his glory !



## MEDITAT. IV.

UPON MY RETIREMENT INTO MY CLOSET.

HOW little doth the world know the happiness of a closet? But it is no wonder, for this happiness is not of the world; and therefore by those that can discern nothing spiritually, it is esteemed as no other than a delight in a sedentary sluggish life, or as no better then a melancholy discontented humour. But my soul, thou art above these misapprehensions. Go in; shall I say into this room, or rather into this other world? into thy world? for when thou art abroad, thou art abroad, thou art in a common world, wherein every person hath an inter-right with thee; but here, within the inclosure of these walls, thou art in a particular world of thine own; and all is thine own.

B

In this little monarchy, methinks I may say without offence, *soul take thine ease*, and with quiet senses enjoy thine own company, it is something for a man to be his own inmate, to dwell with himself; and no small happiness in that cohabitation to live quietly, and without a dropping house. There is a physical virtue in quietness; some diseases in the body, and most distempers in the mind, are cured by it; I may add further, that there is a heavenliness in it; those regions that are highest are quietest, and God himself who is higher then the highest, is in the fruition of himself, the most quiescent. O my God! whilst others affect the wings of an eagle to fly high, let it be my prayer to have the *wings of a dove, to fly away, and be at rest*; that being sequestred from the vexatious vanities of the world, I may enjoy a free conversation with thee in heaven; so shall my quietness be my strength; and this rest a prelibution of my eternal rest!

But yet my soul, take heed unto thyself in this solitude; it is possible for thee to be in ill company, when thou art alone. Be not rash; but think what thou wouldest think! do not affect a free will in thinking; evil thoughts

have an *evil communication* in them, and may *corrupt good manners*: slight not vain thoughts; *the thought of foolishness is sin*; and every foolish thought, as well as *every idle word*, must be accounted for; bar them out, as much as thou canst, and though they may clamour at it, and challenge a prescription for a thoroughfare in thee, and thou art not able altogether to hinder their way, but that they will break through, yet never let it be with thy consent and sufferance, and so long the trespass will be on their side. Above all, be sure to give them no lodging; though thou canst not hinder the birds of the air from flying over thine head, yet thou maist keep them from building, and nestling in thine hair.

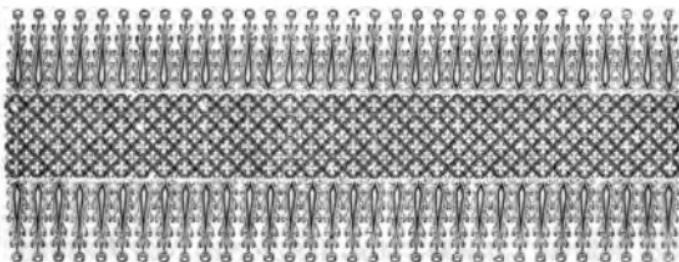
But my God! what shall I do? or wherewith shall I come before thee, who have not so much as a good thought to offer unto thee? O do thou work all my thoughts, as well as in reference to any good, thou *dost work all my workes in me!* *all my sufficiency is of thee.* *Perfect thy strength in my weakness,* and I, *even when I am weak, shall be made strong.*

Methinks this place hath something of a Bethel in it: I may call it *the house of God,*

where I have frequently enjoyed a sweet and comfortable communion with his divine Majesty ; and *the gate of heaven*, where I have often knockt, and it hath been opened unto me. From this poor room I can freely, and without disturbance or interruption, look up, and with an eye of faith contemplate the glories of heaven, the felicity of the saints, the perfection of those tabernacles not made with hands, and behold those invisibilities which mortal *eye hath not seen*, nor *ear heard*, nor *heart conceived* ; from hence I can look down upon *all the workes that are done under the sun*, and see that they are but as the labours of a company of ants in an ant-hill, where some are emploied to gather in their small provisions, and others are buisied about their eggs, and young ones ; and some go up, and some go down, crossing and thwarting one another ; and all are in action, and all is about a little heap of dust.

Let the vain world deride these speculations, and retirements ; it is, and shall be the delight of my soul to enjoy both : whereby I may gain more light to my knowledge, more heat to my affections, and more acquaintance with

my God ; and from a right estimation of *the temporal things which are seen*, come to have a sweet fruition of those *eternal things which are not seen*. In order to this, O thou God of my praiers and praises, teach me how to pray that I may meditate ; and teach me how to meditate that I may pray ; so shall *the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight* ; and thou shalt have the praise of thine own work in me !



## MEDITAT. V.

UPON THE CONTENTMENT I HAVE IN MY BOOKS AND  
STUDY.

HERE is the best solitary company in the world: and in this particular chiefly excelling any other, that here I am sure to converse with none but wise men; but abroad it is impossible for me to avoid the society of fools: what an advantage have I by this good fellowship, that besides the help which I receive from hence, in reference to my life after this life, I can enjoy the life of so many ages before I lived! that I can be acquainted with the passages of three or four thousand years ago, as if they were the weekly occurrences! Here, without travelling so far as Endor, I can call up the ablest spirits of those times; the learnedst Philosophers, and wisest

Counsellours, the greatest Generals, and make them serviceable to me; I can make bold with the best jewels they have in their treasury, with the same freedome that the Israelities borrowed of the *Ægyptians*, and, without suspition of felony, make use of them as mine own. I can here, without trespassing, go into their vineyards, and not only eat my fill of their grapes for my pleasure; but put up as much as I will in my vessel, and store it up for my profit, and advantage.

How doth this prospect at once set off the goodness of God to me, and discover mine own weakness? His goodness in providing these helps for the improvement of mine understanding; and my weakness in needing them. What a pitiful simple creature am I, that cannot live to any purpose, without the help of so many other men's brains? Lord, let this be the first lesson that I learn from these silent counsellors, to know my own ignorance! other knowledge puffeth up, this edifieth.

It was a scoffing, and unhandsome speech in Festus to Paul, that *much learning made him mad*: but it was seriously, and sadly said by the prophet Jeremy, that *every man* (every

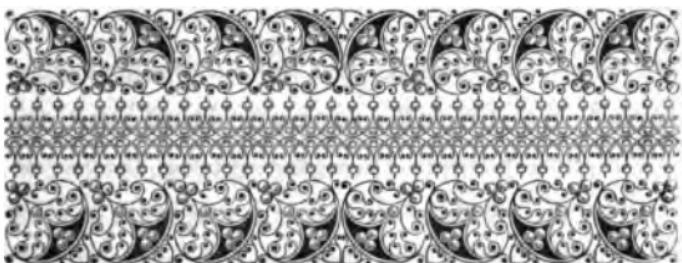
idolatrous wicked man) is *foolish*, or *brutish*, (which is mad almost) by his own knowledge. It is possible for a man to know so much, that at last, by overvaluing his knowledge, he may come to *know nothing, as he ought to know*; and we have an unhappy proof of this, in the example of our first parents; who, out of a fond desire to know more than came to their share, transgressed, and thereby brought themselves to that pass, that they knew only their own shame, and were ashamed of their own knowledge. Whilst others please themselves in high notions and speculations, it shall be my study to follow the Apostle's rule, and to be wise unto sobriety.

But we have a generation of people in the world, that are so far from putting themselves upon the hazard of knowing too much, that they affect a kind of socratical knowledge, though it be the clear contrary way, a knowledge of knowing nothing; they hate learning, and wisdom, and understanding with that perfect hatred, that if one could fancy such things to be in paradise, one would think, if I may speak it, as I mean it without profaness, that the Devil could not tempt them to come near the

tree of knowledge ; I cannot say these are in a state of innocency, but I am sure they are in a state of simplicity. But among those few persons, especially those of quality, that pretend to look after booke, how many are there that affect rather to look upon them, than in them ? some covet to have libraries in their houses, as ladies desire to have cupboards of plate in their chambers, only for shew ; as if they were only to furnish their roomes, and not their mindes ; if the only having of store of bookes, were sufficient to improve a man, the stationers would have the advantage of all others ; but certainly bookes were made for use, and not for ostentation ; in vain do they boast of full libraries, that are contented to live with empty heads.

In opposition to these extremes, I meet with another sort of people, that delight themselves in reading, but it is in such a desultory way, running from one book to another, as birds skip from one bough to another, without design, that it is no mervaile if they get nothing but their labour for their paines, when they seek nothing, but change, and diversion : they that ride post, can observe but little.

It is in reading, as it is in making bookes; there may be a pleasing distraction in it, but little or no profit. I would therefore do in this, as merchants use to do in their trading; who in a coasting way, put in at several ports, and take in what commodities they afford, but settle their factories in those places only which are of special note: I would by the by, allow myself a traffick with sundry authors, as I happned to light upon them, for my recreation; and I would make the best advantage that I could of them; but I would fix my study upon those only, that are of most importance to fit me for action, which is the true end of all learning, and for the service of God, which is the true end of all action. Lord teach me so to study other men's works, as not to neglect mine own! and so to study thy word, which is thy work, that it may be *a lamp upon my feet, and a light upon my path*; my candle to work by! Take me off from the curiosity of knowing only to know; from the vanity of knowing only to be known; and from the folly of pretending to know more then I do know; and let it be my wisdome to study *to know thee, who art life eternal!* Write *thy law in my heart*, and I shall be the best book here!



## MEDITAT. VI.

UPON AN ENTERTAINMENT OF GODLY FRIENDS.

WHAT a deal of heaven is there in this company? methinkes, like Abraham, I *entertain angels*; the comfort and illumination that I receive from them, hath so much of that society in it. Certainly there is no pleasure in this world comparable to the enjoyment of the Communion of Saints; where good people are compacted, and united together in affection, and judgment, and interest, as *fellow members of one body*, which, though many, have but one heart, and one head; and are so one another, that they are *members one of another*, that they are *all one in Christ*.

But in the name of wonder, what is it that should be so taking in this company? where is the wine, and the strong drink? where are

the costly ointments, and the crownes of rose-buds? the musick, dancing, laughing? the world understands the language of these jollities without the help of an interpreter: But for people to meet, only to talk one another into gravity, and to spend time in speculative discourses of another world, when they might give themselves the pleasure of this: if this be mirth, what doth it? It may seem a strange and an impertinent advice of this great moralist to his friend Lucilius, that above all things, he should be careful to learn how to be merry; one would think there should go no great matter of philosophy to that: But there is a mistake in it: True mirth is metaphysical, and supernatural. It is not *the crackling of thornes under a pot*; a blaze, and a noise, and a nothing; the laughter of a madman is not mirth; but it is a severe, and, I may say, a Divine thing. It is an anticipation of the joyes of heaven in the delightful society of a good conscience when we are alone; and, together with that, of conscientious friends, when we are in company. They are *the merry hearts, that keep the continual feast*. It is one of the Devil's lies, and that of which he

hath made as great advantage as of any, that religion is a dull flat melancholy thing; whereas in truth, there is no such cleere, defecate mirth, as that which cometh from the springs above. The Prophet Isaiah, speaking of the coming of our Saviour in the flesh, gave this character of him, that *he should not be sad*, so it is rendered in the vulgar translation, that he should not be of a sullen, retired disposition, but amicable, and free; and it was verified in his conversation. *He was anointed with the oyle of gladness*, and we have that spiritual unction from him. Let the men of the world deride this heavenly mirth, as the covetous Pharisees derided the true riches, which Christ spake of, as a fantastical thing; they do but like those that make themselves merry at the sight of a company dancing a far off, when they cannot hear the musick, whereby their gestures and motions are directed, and therefore judge them to be antick and ridiculous: They take this mirth to be no other than a folly, and laugh at they know not what; because being at such a distance from the godly, they cannot take notice of the heavenly harmony and accord, that is between their orderly conversation, and

the aires of God's Spirit, quickening, and inlivening them with *joys unspeakable and full of glory*. Nothing but ignorance is the mother of this misopinion.

But what are these friends, that are so welcome? are they persons of honour, or interest; is there any thing to be gotten by them? The fashion of the world is, to serve the ball only to those that can return it; and to bid those only, that can bid againe. It is a sad word, *not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish, weak, base, inconsiderable things of the world, things that are nothings, to route and confound all humane wisdome and might, and to annul things that are.* The Lord seeth not, as man seeth; vainglorious fooles may pride themselves in that which is none of their own, the virtue and generosity of their ancestors, or in that which hath no being at all, but in fancy, riches and estates: It is not flaggs and pedigree, but a noble heart, that makes a noble person; true goodness is true greatness; and God's blessing the true riches; he that hath that, hath *all*. As slight account as there is made of

these good people, and of such as these, they are the children of the King of heaven, and though possibly their names may not be extant in the heralds' bookes, they will be *found written in the book of life*. Our little great ones of the world may think them only fit to stand at the lower end of the roome, or to sit under the footstoole ; but with their good leave, they that shall one day *sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdome of heaven*, are good enough now, to be guests at the best table upon earth.

How happy are the hours that are spent in such company as this ? to speak more properly, they are not spent but gained : So much time thus redeemed, is so much life clearly gotten ; there is a prolongation of life in a holy conversation ; it is one thing to be in the world, and another to live in it. They only live, that live well. Vitiuous persons, that give themselves up to their pleasures, are dead whilst they live, and are but a kind of walking ghosts ; but the living they praise God, and they only live that do praise him.

There is nothing that hath a greater influence upon our lives than the company we keep ;

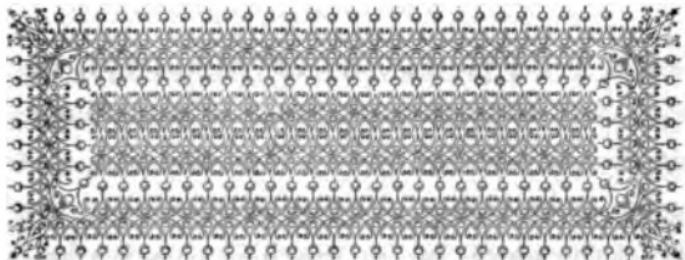
generally men are like that mercurial planet, good or bad according to their conjunction with others. There is in all societies an attracting and assimilating quality; and altho through the corruption that is predominant in our natures, this is more apparent in the operation of evil, rather than of good company, yet where there is true grace, this magnetick virtue will shew itself, and those that are touched with it, will endeavour to work upon others, and to make them like themselves; so Philip will draw Nathaniel; Andrew will draw Peter, and Peter, when converted, will strengthen his Brethen. And of this the worst times are the best witnesses; when through the common opposition of wicked men, the affections of those that are good, are the more inflamed each to other: for as roses and garlic set near together, do by extraction of contrary juices out of the earth become both, in their several kinds, the stronger scented; and the roses are the more sweet and moderate, by the fetide and stinking neighbourhood of the garlic; so by the contrary workings of opposite parties, the good are made very good, and the bad very bad; and those that are good are meliorated

and imbettered, even by the illness of those that are bad. O my soul ! be wary with whom thou dost associate ; it may be discretion to carry a fair civility to those that are without, but let thy delight be fixed upon the saints that are in the earth ; the touch of their conversation will derive virtue to thee. Be not conformed to the men of the world, but let their contrary qualities serve, as by a spiritual antiperistasis, to strengthen thy virtue, and to make it the more compact in itself ; so if thou canst not amend others, thou shalt be sure however to be amended thyself.

But alas ! what are all worldly comforts ? this good fellowship will not hold. We cannot sit by it, like those long lived fathers before the flood, who might meet and be merry together two or three hundred years, and part with a promise to see one another againe so many hundred years after. We are *but of yesterday*, and *know not what to-morrow may bring forth* ; a few yeares, or months, or possibly a less time, may determinate all our jollity. This were sad indeed, *if we had no hope*, but having that anchor hold, we may comfort one another with this, that wherever

we are separated, we can enjoy the communion of one anothers praiers, and meet together at the throne of grace : And though death may part us here for a while, it will be but with a good night one to another, as when we go to bed, and to-morrow we shall meet never to part. In the mean time, O my soul ! think what a blessing it is to have the eternal God to be thy friend, who in the defaillance of all these transitory comforts, will not faile to make up all losses with himself. But *will God indeed dwell with men on the earth ? will the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity,* vouchsafe to humble and abase himself so low, as not only to take notice of, but in an infinite condescension to enter into covenant, into friendship with poor mortal sinful creatures ? with such a despicable worme as I am ? to call me friend, as he doth those that obey his commands ? What ! friend worme ? friend dust ? O the depth ! Lord, *what is man ?* what am I, poor no man, a nothing, that thou so regardest me ? O my God ! I am unworthy to be called thine, in any relation; unworthy to be reckoned in the number of *thine hired servants,* much more to be accounted in the rank of thy friends ;

but it is thy pleasure to call *things that are not, as if they were*, and such is the influence of thy power, that by vertue of that call, thou canst make things to be, what they were not. O let the power of thy gracious vocation have a perfect work upon me to change me, and I shall be changed, to convert me, and I shall be converted! so though by nature I am enmity against thee, by grace I shall be reconciled to thee; I shall then fear thee and thy goodness; shall fear and love thee; and I shall love those that are conformable to thy goodness, because I fear thee; I shall not only have fellowship with thine excellent ones here upon earth, but together with them enjoy society with thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to all eternity in heaven.



## MEDITAT. VII.

UPON THE SIGHT OF A FULL TABLE.

L ORD do not hold it a presumption in thy poor dust and ashes, that I humbly desire, as thy Prophet Jeremy did, to talk with thee; *What is man, that thou takest knowledge of him?* thy word is mine answer, that tells me, it is a pittiful thing, compounded and made up of sin and corruption; its father was earth, and its grand-father was nothing; it *walketh in a vain shew*, and is, in its greatest estate, a lye; and *at its best, altogether vanity*, which is so much less then nothing before thee. But *behold I have taken upon me to speak unto thee, O let not my Lord be angry*, if I ask thee now, what man is not, that thou makest such account of him, and so providest for him? Thine other creatures, even those that are the chief of thy wayes, are contented with

their single portions ; thy Behemoth is satisfied with that ordinary which the mountaines bring him forth, and he lookes no further ; so is the Leviathan pleased with his recreation in the great and wide sea, and that element is enough for him. But man, as if all were too little for his grandeur, hath no bounds, *thou hast put all things under his feet*, earth, sea, aire, fire, pay contribution to his subsistance, and comfort; *what couldst thou have done unto him that thou hast not done ? O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name ! all thy workes praise thee*; how should man praise thee, for whose service thou hast made all thy workes ! What a deal of labour is here for the mouth ! what a concurrence of art with nature, to please the gluttony, not only of the mouth, but of the eye ! People affect an ingenuity in luxury, as if their wits lay in their bellies and not in their braines. It is not enough to have good meat, if it have not a relish of the East Indies ; it must be so spiced, that an Ægyptian would think it were rather imbalmed to be buried, and kept for mummy, than seasoned to be eaten ; it must be so diversified and so disguised in the dressing, that every dish must be

a riddle, as if it were a special point of reputation for a man to eat he knows not what: If our forefathers could see our hachees, and olliae, and hodgpodges, and such like commixtures as we make of several meats together, they would take us to be no better than doggs, and they would pity the depravity of our taste.

But to what purpose is this waste? how many empty stomachs might this superfluity have filled? possibly less at the table, and more at the door, might have done better. Certainly, we are not the better for it: this high feeding doth but cloud the understanding with fumes and vapours, and pampers lust, and breeds ill humours, and makes provision for wormes, and who would place any felicity in that, which being received into him, must pass at last by so ignominious away from him? But for prevention of all surfeiting, the witty folly of this time hath found out another way, how to make costly entertainments, and no bodyes belly the fuller for them; an art to furnish a table with nothing, but nothing; with *quelque choses*, and apparitions of meat. This is perfectly *to spend money for that which is not bread*; and it is justly punished in the dissatisfaction that

followes it; for, as *in a dream of a feast*, so here, a man *seemeth to eat and to drink*, but after all is done, his soul is *empty and faint and craving*. What is this, but to play with God's blessings, as little children play with their meat, when they have weak and squaimish, or no stomachs? this nicety and wantonness is far from the plainness and simplicity of the good old world, when a shoulder of mutton was set by for the special entertainment of a king, in designation; and a peece of veale, a dish of butter, a mess of milk, and a few cakes baked upon the hearth, was accounted a fit welcome and treatment for angels.

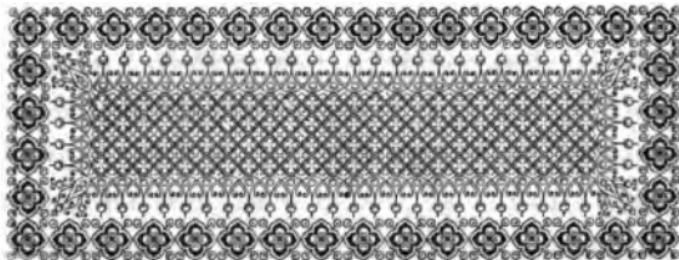
I am not so straight laced as not to allow a convenient latitude in the use of God's creatures; not only for necessity, but for comfort and delight, a due regard being had to the quality of persons, and to the emergency of occasions. Our ever blessed Saviour stuck not to honour diverse festival entertainments with his gracious presence. But that which is a scandal to me, is the sinful abuse of this liberty; when plaine Maister Nabal will needs make good his name in feasting it like a king; and when nothing less will serve Dives then *fairing*

*deliciously every day, it is no wonder if his end were damnation, whose belly was his God.* We are commanded to rejoice in the lawful use of the creatures, but we are forbidden to abuse them either through profuseness or wantonness or cruelty. What an ugly sight is it to see men eat not only as to live, but as if they lived only to eat? to see them eat, as if they were at day labour, and in their vocation; turning God's curse into wantonness, when with the paines they take, *they eat their bread in the sweat of their faces.* O my God! what shall I say, or what shall I not say of them? *Their throats are open sepulchers,* wherein together with their graces, and parts, and estates, they bury themselves in themselves. They are no better then living vaults, or sewers, such beastly creatures, as it is a hard matter to speak of them in cleanly terms. Who can take in a dunghill without offence?

In opposition to this excess, there is another generation of people, that run into a contrary extream, affecting a shew of wisdome in humility and neglect of the body; who refuse and reject God's blessings, out of a seeming fear least they should abuse them; and upon

that account abstaine from meates, which he hath created to be received with thanksgiving; but who hath required this at their hands? every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, that comes from his Divine bounty. Ahaz was never a wit the more tenderer conscienced, for refusing to ask a signe when it was offered him. We do but provoke God's patience, when we will not accept the free tenders of his goodness.

Lord keep thy servant in a middle condition, between luxuriancy, and penury; feed me with food convenient for me; that as on the one side, I may not through fulness deny thee; so on the other, I may not through want be reduced to take irregular wayes. Give me such a manerly appetite, as to the things of this world, that considering diligently what thy providence hath set before me, I may rest contented and satisfied with thy carving, without reaching over the board for a better bit, or rudely snatching it from my neighbour's trencher; so shall I in the midst of all straights enjoy a sufficiency, and in that enough have as good as a feast. If enough be too little, to much will not be enough.



## MEDITAT. VIII.

UPON A FIT OF THE GOUT.

**L**ORD, *when thou with rebukes doest correct man for iniquity*, what a moth is he in thine hands? and how easily crushed? Eliphaz saith *he is crushed before the moth*; so that according to his opinion, the moth should be the better man of the two. I am here a lecture of mortality to myself; and yet in truth, I can hardly expound myself, and say what I am, in this condition. I am an infirmity of the world, rather than any part of it; a living hospital; or, to speak more properly, the ghost of my departed self; here I dwelt once, but now, here I lie, and am mine own monument, with the figure of a man, and nothing within, but a *dead man's bones and corruption*. How near nothing am I? I have so much of an idol in

me, which is nothing, as I have feet, and walk not. I can neither go nor stand, nor hardly stir, but as my pain quickens me; and yet I cannot without a suffering, lie still. My pain is my life. O my soul! when the pillars upon whieh the house standeth begin to faile, it is high time for thee to think of removing.

May I say, why am I thus? whither should I go to enquire, O my God! but unto thee? I know thou doest nothing, but upon just grounds, and for good ends. Thou art righteous, but I am a sinful creature: *I do remember my faults this day:* How I have loved to wander in the world: My steps have turned out of thy way; and mine heart hath walked after mine eyes; and I have polluted and stained the garments of my profession. 'Tis therefore just with thee, to punish me as a fool and a vagrant; to stock and whip me; to shut me up, and to make me smart for it, as children are shut up and corrected, when they have run abroad and durtied themselves. I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? I have borne chastisement, and by thy grace I will offend no more.

It is no less then a signal mercy, that I am

not taken away at once, with a suddain stroke, by a dead palsie, or appoplexy, or some such speeding disease ; that I am not chased out of the world, as a vision of the night, and hurled out of my place, as with a storme ; that I do not go down in a moment to the grave, in mine unrepented sins ; but that I have time given me, by this visitation, to fit myself for mine appointed change. Lord sanctify this mercy to me, that whilst I do live, I may endeavour to spend my little remnant of time here so, as I would spend mine eternity hereafter, in glorifying thee ; and then let death come never so suddenly, it will come but like a friend ; the sooner, the better wellcome ! But why should I be so much moved with the sense of this weakness ? there is no new thing happened unto me, but what is ordinarily incident to my years. This, and other the like infirmities, are in the course of any considerable age, but as the accidents of dust, or durt, or raine in a long journey ; which every rational man will expect, and reckon upon before hand. Lord give me a true sense of the frailty of my condition, and I shall no more wonder at mine infirmities, then I wonder at my life.

But what do I speak of infirmities? I may rather justly bless God for the long continued health, which for so many years I have formerly enjoyed, than grudge at my present suffering. I have been a young man a great while, and therefore it is but reason I should be contented to be an old man a little while: what? *shall I receive good at the hands of God, and shall I not receive evil?*

But why do I miscall my gout? shall a heathen philosopher, Possidonius, be able, upon the strength of a natural resolution, to protest in the midst of his pain in this infirmity, that no extremity should ever make him confess it to be an evil; and shall not grace have so much power upon me, as to make me acknowledge that it is good for me to be thus chastened? shall I fly out into impatience when God corrects me for my profit? They that will not lie still when God whips them, do but gaine the more stripes; and by their impatience make it appear that they were not corrected enough before.

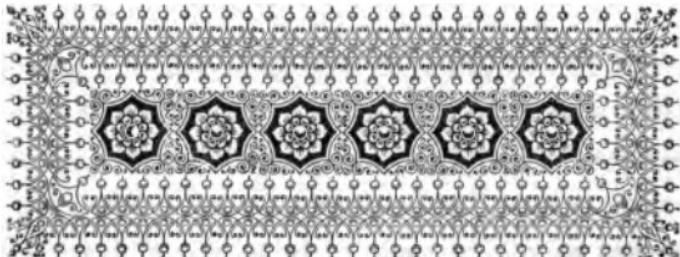
Nay Lord, I bless thee, not only for thy staff but for thy rod, which although it be one of thy smartest ones, and by the continuance

whereof I am brought thus low, yet I find the end thereof to be dipt in hony, tending to mine edification, not to my destruction. This very infirmity under which I lie, hath the reputation to be of a medicinal nature; as it contracteth other malignant humours into one channel, and spendeth them with itself, so let all thy chastisements, O Lord, operate upon me, for the purging of mine iniquity, and the taking away of my sin, and I shall reckon them in the number of my blessings.

What though these paines be violent? they are the less likely to continue; either they will end themselves, or end me; the difference is not much; either way there will be an end, and that shortly. The life of man is *of few days, and full of trouble*: And therefore when I think how short my time is, I am contented, because it is so full of trouble; and when I consider how troublesome it is, I am comforted with the thought, that it is so short.

But now Lord, what waite I for? my hope, my only hope, is in thee. Shall I say, remove thy stroke away from me? let me alone? far be that from me; deliver me, O my God! from that penal impunity; and vouchsafe rather to

continue thy gracious rod upon me, so long as thou shalt see it good ; for so long I am sure it shall be for my good ; and I shall look upon it as a dear blessed gout to me. Shew thy mercy to me, as thou didst to thy children of Israel, in punishing mine inventions : Chasten me, so thou love me ; scourge on, so thou receive me, and it shall be my consolation. O give me not only strength to bear these paines, but thankfulness for them, and wisdome to improve by them ; that I may neither despise thy chastening, nor be weary of thy correction ! So shall thy rod, like the rod of Aaron, be productive ; and not only blossom, but bring forth fruit unto me, even *the peaceable fruit of righteousness*. Make me such when I am well, as I would be when I am sick. In all conditions, let *thy grace be sufficient for me* ; perfect thy *strength in my weakness* and imperfection ; and then I shall take pleasure in my paines, and *glory in mine infirmities* ; and be able to say with that great Apostle, when *I am weak I am strong*, and when I am sick, I am well.



## MEDITAT. IX.

UPON MY RECOVERY OUT OF THE GOUT.

IS this a recovery, or a resurrection ? It was but a while ago, that I had two feet in the grave, and that I was ready to claime my last kindred with wormes and corruption ; and in what an eagle condition am I now ? how renewed, or rather resuscitated ? me thinkes I am, as if I had outlived my death, mine own survivour, the posterity of myself : Certainly life doth not consist in living, but in well being ; health is the life of life, and without that, we have but *a name that we live, but we are dead*. There is nothing to be preferred before the health of the body, but holiness, which is the health of the soul. O Lord ! thou art the God of life and death ; thou killest, and thou makest alive ; thou woundest, and

thou healest ; thou, even thou art he, and there is no God with thee. I drew near unto destruction, but upon my cry unto thee, it pleased thee to send thy soveraine word to heal me, and I was healed. O that I could therefore praise thee for thy goodness, not only with my lips, but with that life, which thou hast so often re-given me ! *The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day,* and as I desire to do all my remaining days.

But am I so perfectly well ? I may ask myself how I do, without offence : and it is not an impertinent inquiry. Blessed be God, my house of clay is in a comfortable measure repaired and made tenantable again for a while. But how is all within ? how doth the principal one, so Job calleth the soul ! It is my soul, that is myself ; my body is but mine old suite new mended ; the sheath of my soul, as it is stiled by Daniel ; the health and prosperity of that, would signify little to me, except, according to the tenor of St. John's wish unto Gaius, my soul also prosper ; a sick soul in a sound body, is the worst constitution that can be. It is written in the prophecy of Isaiah, touching the restoration of Jerusalem, that *the*

*inhabitants thereof shall not say, I am sick,* for the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity. O Lord ! I am sick till mine iniquity be forgiven. Thou hast shewed mercy to my worldly part, to my lay part ; O heal my spiritual part ; which needs thy mercy most, and will relish it best ! Untill that be done, I am sick, though never so well. But admitting, with all humble thankfulness, my present being in perfect health ; I have no reason to think it will continue long ; all things under the sun are subject to vicissitude and change ; and whilst that I say so, I am changed myself. My very health is but a brooding of sickness, and every sickness is a pang of death. My whole life is no other then a gradual dying. I remember the first time I died, was when mine infancy expired in my youth ; the next was when my youth ended in middle age ; which was followed by the determination of that in mine old age ; and yet I have no less then two deaths more to look for ; the departure of mine old age in death itself ; and the death of death, in the death of Christ. Who would covet such a pittiful life, which the longer it lasteth, the oftener it dieth ? nay

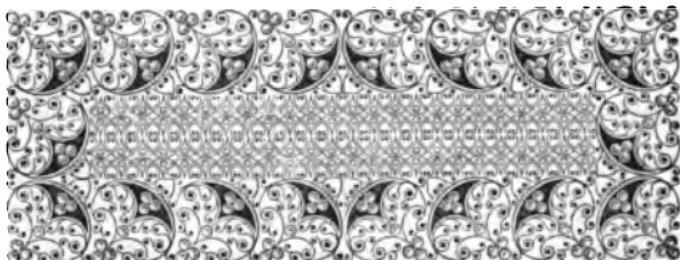
which in truth is so far from a true lasting, that it taketh up no time at all ; there is a time to be born, and a time to die, saith the preacher, but there is no time assigned to live, because our whole life is but a time of dying.

If I had a lease of health for term of life, I could not but look upon it, at my years, as near worne out. When I was at my best, I was but grass ; now that the flower of that grass is faded, in this dried, withered condition, what am I better then mere hay and stubble ? O my soul ! be not secure upon this recovery, there is nothing that doth sooner draw on sickness, then a fond presumption of health : many had never been sick so soon, if they had not been well too soon. Health requires a good husbandry. But in a special manner consider how it is possible for that body to be well long, that hath but a short time to be. Wouldst thou redeem this time, and so extend it ? labour to be good. Virtue is not subject to time, but will out-live death itself. What is the health of my body, but the strength of my prison ? who would glory in that ? I read of some pious men, that have lamented their recovery out of sickness, as finding themselves

to be worse when they were better, and best when they were ill. Lord look upon thy poor prisoner of hope, and in thy good time deliver me well out of myself; and in the mean time make me truly thankful for any comfort, or accommodation that I enjoy in my present condition. Without thy sanctifying grace thy mercies are judgements, and this health will be but a killing prosperity to me.

Health is one of God's talents, which they unto whom it is committed are to account for; and if they do not improve it to his service, they might be sick better cheap. That health is pestilential that makes the possessor thereof luxurious and disorderly. O my God! let it be my care to devote my life, and particularly my health, the best of my life unto thee, from whom alone I derive both health and life. Bedrid oblations are but the offerings of the refuse. I confess mine are little better than such, at this time of mine age, but my trust is in the goodness of thine eye, that thou wilt not in any wise reject those that come unto thee, though at *the eleventh hour*. O my God! and most gracious Father, sanctifie all thy dispensations unto me, and then they shall

co-operate together for my good. *My reins shall instruct me in the night season;* my gout shall make me run unto thee; and my recovery shall enable me to minister unto thee, as Peter's wife's mother did, so soon as her fever had left her. Blessed be thy name, that I have been ill, and thy name be praised that I am well. Let me never live longer than I praise, and bless, and glorifie thee.



## MEDITAT. X.

### UPON MY IMPRISONMENT.

WHAT is there in an imprisonment, that should make that condition so formidable? It is not the uncouthness of it, we cannot say this is new, for it is common to all: we are all prisoners by nature, during life; even before we were born, we suffered a confinement in the womb that bear us; lying for so many months as we lived there, inclosed in the lowest parts of the earth in a polluted, dark, narrow room, where we could not so much as be turned, without hazard of our lives; and when we came into the world, we were but removed, as by a writ, to another prison; or rather we were born, like snails, with our prisons upon our backs. Our souls, which are

the man in us, being captivated in our bodies, and so cooped up, that they are disabled thereby to act or operate, further than, as through a grate, according to the narrow latitude of our corporeal organs. What is the whole world, but as it were a common jail, wherein we are all imprisoned? and however some may have a larger and better accommodation therein than others, yet all are within the rule. I read of Nicolo Donato, Duke of Venice, that he was foretold by an astrologer, who had calculated his nativity, that he should die in a noble prison; which was afterwards applied to the restrained, limited honour of that dukedom, wherein he ended his days. To let the prediction pass; I may truly affirm, that the greatest, and most resplendent fortunes in the world, are no better than commodious captivities, and honourable prisons; and they that enjoy them may account themselves in the condition of that Greek Emperour, Michael Balbus, who took possession of his chair of state, with a pair of shackles about his heels.

But what are the inconveniences of a prison? I deny not but that there may be a just resent-

ment of the loss of liberty. He that doth not feel it, wanteth sense; but he that cannot bear it, wanteth reason, if not grace; whatever the suffering be, impatience doth but aggravate it. When we lie like *wilde bulls in a net*, fretting and struggling against the providence of God, we do but impester, and intangle ourselves the more, and, like those sottish Thracian captives, that brake their teath  
Florus l. t. 1. 12. with biting and gnawing their chaines, by our impatience we do both punish our own ferity, and thereby, make sport to our enemies.

Is the bare confinement, a matter so to be startled at? We may as well think the fixed stars unhappy, because they cannot wander. Things are best kept when they are lockt up; many men have been preserved by this meanes from greater dangers, which they might have incurred, if they had been at liberty; and their imprisonment hath been really a safe custody unto them. However, it is for children to cry when they may not go abroad. True liberty is to be found within doores. What though my body be confined? my soul is not. I may possibly be disabled by this restraint,

from performing good actions, but that cannot hinder me from enjoying good thoughts; from *communing with mine own heart*; from *having my conversation with God in heaven*. Thoughts are free. Let the imprisonment be never so close and straight, if I be not *straightend in myself*, I am at liberty; it is not the narrowness of the room, but of the mind, that makes the prison incommodious; no man suffers by it, but he that is unwilling to suffer; for he that will do what he must do, is a free man, because he does what he will: a free imprisonment, is better then a servile liberty. They are the prisoners in truth, that are captivated to their own lusts, and passions, and interests. It is not evil to suffer, but to do evil.

But I am here immured in an obscure base condition: What then? true virtue is a jewel, that can give a lustre in the dark. If the worth of a mere moral man, as was Socrates, could be thought sufficient to take off the ignominy and reproach of a prison, upon the account of his lying there, how much more should the honour of a Christian illustrate and dignify the basest dungeon.

But I am separated and cut off from the

society of the world : The further off the better, except the world were better. What is there in the world, but *the lust of the flesh*, and *the lust of the eyes*, and *the pride of life*? and what can there be more proper for remedy of these evils, then this confinement? wherein, as to the first, my *body* is sufficiently *kept under*, and *brought into subjection*; for although I cannot say, that I am lodged as our king Edward the second was, in a vault, among dead carcasses; yet in a civil way I am buried here, and am but a kind of living corps; a mortification to myself. As for mine eyes they are secured from the temptation of any vain objects, having little else to behold, but bare old ruinous walls; the emblems of mine own decayed condition; and in this desolate, forlorn habitation, what exercise can there be for pride, except it be in a holy way, to despise the world? Company, and not solitude is the scene of pride.

O my soul! is it not an happiness to be freed from these snares? Wilt thou be disquieted for being shut out of a pest-house? What, though thou beest as a sparrow alone, and that no eye take notice of thee? It is for

players to be out of countenance, when no body sees them act ; a good conscience is a thousand spectators. Nay, be not deceived, thou art not alone, when thou art most alone : God is here, and *he that is higher than the highest, regardeth thee* ; Christ is so *with thee*, that he is *in thee* ; persecuted in thee ; and afflicted in thine affliction ; the Holy Ghost is thy comforter ; the angels are thy guardians, they keep thee, they minister unto thee ; and is not this good company ?

But there is a dishonour that sticks to this condition ; which is usually followed with contempt and scorn : True, if the cause of committment were dishonorable ; if I suffered as a malefactor : But when the cause is God's, and that I *suffer for doing well*, I am so far from being ashamed of my chain, that I glory in it, as in a favour from God's own hand. What have I, that I have not received ? my very sufferings, as well as the grace of believing, are to be reckoned among my receipts ; to me *it is given, not only to believe, but to suffer*. As to the contempt of the world, there is nothing more contemptible ; no man is subject to that, but he that lies under a contempt

within himself. Retain thine own dignity, O my soul ! and thou art above it.

But possibly thou maist shrink at the apprehension of poverty and want, which are usual concomitants of a captive estate; be not cast down, nor disquieted with this. He that hath himself, and is in possession of his own soul, hath lost nothing. I am yet richer than I was when I came into the world. Blessed be God, I have yet all that Jacob could wish ; bread to eat, and rayment to put on ; whilst many better then I, have not so much. Whatsoever is more than that, is more than needs. Job gave God thanks, when he had nothing before him ; Paul, when he had nothing, had all. I can claim nothing from God, as due unto me, but the wages of my sins ; and that is something worse then nothing. Be thankful, O my soul ! for what thou hast ; be humbled for what thou hast not : in all conditions labour to be content ; and in that contentment, with God's blessing, thou wilt find all.

But it is the continuance of an imprisonment, that may seem tedious, and be grievous : Certainly that cannot be long ; for the life of man, is but of short continuance : It can be but

like an ill lodging in an inn, and we should bear it accordingly ; what though the night be long ; it is but a night, and we shall be gone in the morning. Remember, O my soul ! that a long imprisonment is not so bad, as an everlasting one. Bless God that thou art not laid *in chaines of darkness*, with the Devil and his angels, *reserved unto the judgment* of the last dreadful day. Be not weary of well suffering, no more then of well doing : think of the glorious army of Martyrs ; How did many of them languish with a desire to be in thy condition, and reckoned themselves in prison, till they were in prison ? Thou *hast not yet resisted unto blood*, as they did ; thou art in the hands of thine heavenly Physician, who best knows thine infirmity, and thy constitution, and complexion, and what is fittest for thee, beyond all that thou canst think ; what if he, seeing that sharp and quick remedies be not so proper for thee, and that thou canst not bear them, do put thee in this slow course of physick ; to spend thy disease by a strict restrained diet ? wilt thou presume to dispute his prescription ? do not, but obey, and follow it.

But what if this imprisonment should be but praecursory to a further, a greater, and it may be a capital punishment? I may consider in what hands I am; that I am under the power of a frantick people, that have cast off their obedience to all lawful authority, and know not how to weigh out justice unto any, without putting their sword into the scales: O my soul! thou mayest do wisely to look beforehand through thy danger, to the uttermost end thereof; and to arm thyself against the worst that may be; but in taking this perspective, make use of thy reason, not of thy passion: a provident care, and a solicitous despondency are two things. Do not punish thyself with may bes. Do not antidate afflictions, and make thyself miserable at present, by an apprehension that thou mayest come to be miserable hereafter. He that in a timerous solicitous way takes thought for to-morrow, labours under that suffering to-day, which he apprehendeth for to-morrow; and cannot but fear more then he should, because he fears sooner then he should; He doth in a sort put the lye upon our blessed Saviour, as if *the evil of the day were not sufficient unto it.* These

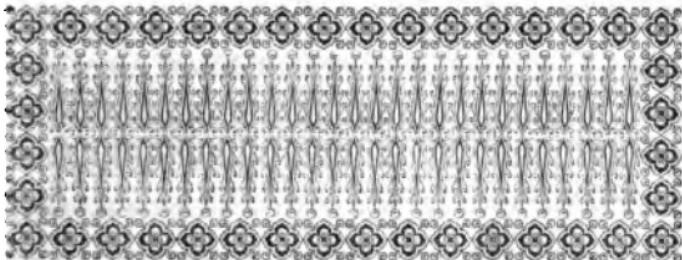
querulous fancies argue an unfixeness of heart, as the creaking of a board sheweth it to be loose, and not well fastened. The moralists can tell us in this case, that there is nothing more easily deceived, than humane foresight : That in such future contingencies, as it is observed in acute diseases, our predictions are very uncertain ; that there is a levity in evil, as well as in good fortune ; both alike subject to vicissitudes, and changes, and neither of them long lasting ; that we many times apprehend things to come, that do not come, and that our expectations do as often fail us in our fears, as in our hopes ; that in dangers imminent, our fear of them, may exceed the dangers we fear ; death itself may be overfeared, so that by running from it, we may run into it. Nabal died, for fear of dying ; that those hazards that threaten us most, may break up of themselves, as we see the clouds that gather and look black upon us, do often blow over without a shower ; that great appearances of evil are sometimes averted by petty accidents, as some say, that lightning may be put by with the wind of a man's hat ; and that it is good therefore to intermix hope with fear, and

fear with hope, so to contemper and ballance one affection with another. But these philosophers are like meteors, something above earth, and a great deal below heaven : O my soul ! *have faith in God*, and let thine heart be fixed on him, and thou *shalt not be afraid of evil tidings* ; thou *shalt never be moved*. *Take no thought of the morrow*, as to the evil thereof, *for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself*. Thou art a poor captive exile, yet do not make haste through unbelief to be loosed ; *who art thou that fearest the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy*, who shall *himself be destroyed and made as grass ? and where is the fury of the oppressor ?* O my God ! *my time is in thine hand*, and what can man do unto me ? nay what can the Devil do ? He may, by a divine permission, for a season, if need be, cast me into prison ; but it shall be only to try and purifie, and whiten me. It is not in his power to do me so much hurt, but for my greater good. He cannot take my liberty and my life both from me ; but in taking the one, he must give me the other ; he cannot take my life, but withal he must restore me my liberty ; and that in

such a way as he can never take it away from me more. The worst that he can do, is but that which is best of all ; and therefore *at what time I am afraid, I will trust in God.*

Lord sanctifie this dispensation to me, this rod of thine own appointment, and teach me to understand the language of it. I confess I have abused my former liberty to a licentiousness, and therefore this restraint is but a due reward unto me, and the proper wages of my sin. O my God ! unto thee belongeth mercy, for thou hast rendered to me according to my work. It is of thy never failing compassion, that I am not consumed. Thou art merciful in thy justice, and just in thy mercy. O take what vengeance thou wilt of mine inventions, so thou forgive my sin ! Lay what bands soever it shall please thee upon my body, so thou free my soul, and inlarge my heart to run the way of thy commandments. Give me not only a patient, but a thankful sense of any sufferings, which I may, or do undergo, for the advancement of thy glory ; and let me never think my penny too little, which I receive from thee, if it be accompanied with the honour of bearing the heat of the day in thy service ; but give me the

grace to look upon that honour, as the best part of my pay ; and until the time, that thy word do come for my deliverance, let thy word try me, so shall I at last come out gold ; in the mean while, in the worst of prisons, I shall be thy free-man, which is the best and most noble of all conditions.



## MEDITAT. XI.

UPON MY RELEASE.

WHEN *the Lord turned again my captivity* I was like them that dream. Me thought I had been made a prisoner for divers years, by a tumultuary violence; and in that condition tossed like a ball, from one place to another; remote from my relations; where I was as *unknown, yet well known; as dying, and yet living; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;* and me thought upon the sudden, all these as it were sufferings vanished, and I was restored to my liberty, to my family, and friends again. At the first, like Peter, I was in a manner intraunced, as if I had seen a vision, and I could hardly believe mine eyes; but recollecting myself, I found sufficient reason to acknowledge, as that great

apostle did, that *the Lord hath sent his angel, and delivered me out of the hand of mine enemies, and from all the expectation of those that hated me.* What shall I do, or what shall I say unto thee, *O thou preserver of men?* thou art exalted above all thanksgiving and praise. Lord, open my lips, and I shall be enabled at once, both to praise thee for this mercy, and to praise thee for opening my lips, and enabling me to praise thee !

How sweet is liberty after a restraint? certainly a prosperous condition is never so well relished as after an affliction; as wine is then best tasted, when we have first tasted a bitter olive.

But as honey is good, and yet in the excess thereof nauseous, so liberty, how sweet soever in itself, may, if taken beyond the measure so sufficiency, draw on a surfeit of licentiousness. It is in that, as physicians say it is in health; a high degree thereof may be dangerous. O my soul! labour to moderate thine affections in all conditions; and now that God hath been pleased to fill thy cup again, pray for a steady hand, that thou maist carry it without spilling: Otherwise, this sudden change, from such a confinement, to such an inlargement, will be

but like a sudden good signe immediatly after a bad one, which, according to the old rule of divination by the intrails of beasts, was accounted to be of unlucky signification; it may be a prognostick, that a worse thing will happen unto thee. In all time, not only of my tribulation, but of my weal, and prosperity, good Lord deliver me !

But it may be a moot point, whether I am much safer now, then I was before. My former restraint was in the nature of a safegard, or of a harbour to me, where though I were in a manner landlockt, yet I lay secure, and out of the wind : now that I am abroad, I may say I have more sea roome, but withall I am more exposed to foul weather, than I was before. There is no condition under the sun so purely and simply good, but that it hath an alloy of evil in it, and that to such a proportion, that, as it is in base money, the alloy is, for the most part, more than the true mettal.

But is liberty then so indifferent a thing, that there should be but a measuring cast between it and imprisonment? there must needs be a wider difference between them, than so; for it is said, that God doth not

willingly grieve the children of men, to crush under his feet the prisoners of the earth, but that he hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants; and therefore in their liberty, without which there can be but little taste in prosperity.

The greatest blessings that come from the hand of God, are characterized by this blessing: The Gospel is stiled a proclamation of *liberty to the captives*, and an *opening of the prison to them that are bound*; the Spirit of God is termed *a free Spirit*, and where that is, there is said to be *liberty*; we are called unto liberty, and commanded *to stand fast* in it; we shall be judged by *the law of liberty*; this as to our spiritual condition. And as to our outward freedom, it may be a sufficient argument of the value that God sets upon it, that he laid a particular command upon his people of Israel, that they should be tender of one another's liberty; and to that end, bound them to the observation of the seventh, and fiftieth years, for the release and manumission of those that were held under service; and that he punished those violators thereof in the siege of Jerusalem, with so much severity; by proclaiming a liberty to the sword, pestilence,

and famine against them for it : Liberty is in itself an inestimable blessing, and such a jewel as every man may set his own price upon it, and it is worth it to him ; if we cannot enjoy it as we would, or know not how to bear and use it, as we should, it is either our own unhappiness, or our fault : The *old bottles* are to be blamed, and not the *new wine*.

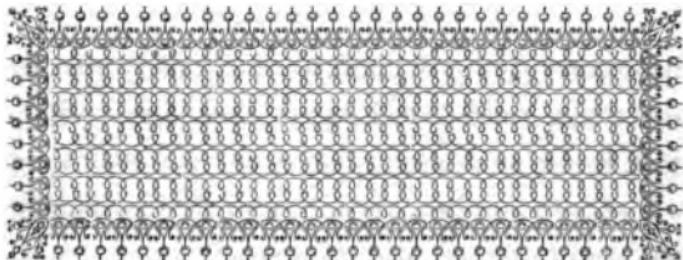
But what is liberty ? there may be a mistake in that, the apostle speaketh of some in his days, that talked much of liberty and promised it to others, *whilst they themselves were the servants of corruption* ; there may be a servility, under an ostentation of liberty. They that are captivated to their own inordinate affections are no better than slaves, let their quality be otherwise what it will. True liberty doth not consist in a power over others, but in a command over ourselves. He is not a freeman that can do what he will, but he that will do what he should ; and who is *a law unto himself*, and can rule his own spirit : Neither can that be called properly a liberty, which is an obstinate opposition of lawful authority ; such an inflexibility, as will bow to nothing : We do not say that lions and wolves are at

liberty in their woods, but that they run wild there ; and so for those *despisers of dominion* that will run their own irregular ways, and think, as God spake ironically of the Babel builders, that nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do, they may be said to be rather savage and brutish, than free. The best is, they are both the one and the other alike in this, as well as in their ferity, that as they have not the will to obey, so they have not the wit to command, and therefore break and divide among themselves, and settle nothing. God who hath determined *the bounds of our habitations*, hath likewise set bounds unto our liberties, beyond the which they that are proudest, and swell themselves highest, are not to pass.

I have read of king Agrippa, that being restored to his liberty by Claudius, after a long imprisonment under Tiberius, he consecrated his chain to God in the temple of Jerusalem, in memory of his former suffering and in recognition of God's mercy to him in his deliverance : The example is good, and carries a good light with it. And now Lord what shall I render unto thee for the like mercy in this

inlargeinent of my condition? Shall I offer up my chain unto thee? Lord, accept my whole self, body, soul, subsistence, the service of my all, as an entire oblation and thank-offering devoted to thy glory!

O my soul! *praise thou the Lord, and all that is within me, bless his holy name,* who hath heard thy groaning, and redeemed thee from destruction, and brought forth *thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon day.* Rejoice in this day of thy prosperity, but withal consider, that there is no day so clear, but may be overcast before night; *the clouds may return again after the rain.* Be not secure, but walk circumspectly, least if thou use this liberty for an occasion to carnal ends, and for a *cloak of maliciousness,* thy last state prove worse than thy first. Thy person is now at liberty; let not thy passions be so too, but keep them under restraint, so shalt thou lead thy captivity captive. Lord, vouchsafe to inlarge my heart, not that I may walk in the counsel of the ungodly, but that I may pursue *the way of thy commandments.* O lead me into thy truth; *thy word is truth,* thy Son is thy word; and if *thy Son do make me free, I shall be free indeed.*



## MEDITAT. XII.

UPON THE SIGHT OF A FAIR HOUSE.

WHAT a goodly fabrick is here? Our first parents were never so housed. For ought that doth appear, they took no more care at first for building, than the birds or beasts did: there were then no royal pallasces, for the ambitious spider to weave in; but nature was the common architect, as well as cook and caterer. A shadie tree, or the covert of a grotto, or cave, served for all lodgers: Man was never so happy, nor so well provided for, as in that condition, which we esteem most miserable, when he had neither clothes to put on, nor house to put his head in. If we look to the second edition of the world, after the flood, and to the generation of the faithful therein, to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, those heirs

of promise, they dwelt in tents, and, like the sun, were carried about in their movable tabernacles; ever in a transitory, but heavenly estate. But what do I speak of man, or of the son of man, that is a worm? Our blessed Saviour himself, who was Lord of heaven and earth, *by whom all things were made, that were made*, when he made himself man, and dwelt on the earth, was not so well accommodated as the meanest creatures; *the foxes, and birds of the air*, they had *their holes*, and they had *their nests*, but he had *not where to lay his sacred head*: His first lodging was in another man's house, and his last in another man's grave: in the mean time the mighty Man, he had the earth, and the honourable Man dwelt in it; the earth was his house, he was the only dweller; when the goodman was but a sojourney; and the God-man, if I may speak it with all humble reverence, our blessed Saviour, was little more than a beggar in it; who then would put any extraordinary value upon these worldly contentments, seeing how they are dispensed? they are but *the crums that fall under the table*, of which the dogs have the greatest share. It is said, that the

great apostle *knew not what he said*, when he said, *it was good being here*; our true happiness consists in our not being here. O my soul! let the men of the world please themselves with *their portion in this life*, and *join house to house, and lay field to field*, till there be no place for a neighbourhood about them; but do thou rejoice, that this is not thy continuing place; thou knowest where to be far better then here; even in that *heavenly mansion* prepared for thee, *whose builder and maker is God*. Never look to be in a settled condition, till thou comest thither!

How are our vanities heightened? and what a vast excess are we grown from that primitive simplicity? when instead of contenting ourselves with what nature affordeth, in order to our preservation from the injuries of the air and weather, we exhaust and weare out the materials of nature, and rack the inventions of art, to please the *lust of our eyes*, which may quickly have too much, but can never have enough to satisfy their seeing. We build houses like townes, and townes like countries, for their capacity and extent, when God knows contentment may be lodged in a little room.

But what was the reason of that plainness and homeliness of those good people of old? was it because they were ignorant and poor, and had not the wit, nor ability to be such magnificent fools, as we are? certainly no, those holy Patriarks were not so plainly bred, but that they understood kings and courts well enough; sometimes scorning to be beholding to them, and at other times being courted by them. They were not indigent persons, but according to the way of those times, rich in flocks, and herds; they had great families, and wanted not for gold and silver, not for any other accommodation: but the truth is, *they looked for a heavenly country, and for a habitation of God's making:* looking upon no house as worth the consideration, but that *which is not made with hands.*

But yet there is no hurt in these enjoyments; they are things, not in themselves simply evil; for then the righteous would have no portion at all of them; Abraham would have been as poor as Lazarus: neither are they positively good; for then the wicked would not have so large a share in them; Dives would not have *fared so deliciously every day;* but they are

indifferencies, either good or bad, according as they are well, or ill used. It is free for any man to take comfort in a good house, and to delight himself, as Solomon did in his workes, and buildings, and plantations; but then it must be upon Solomon's terms too, so as his *wisdom also do remain with him*. The fault is not in the having, but in the abusing of these things, by trusting in them, and bottoming ourselves upon them. Let our houses be never so strongly and massily built, if, according to Bildad's expression, we lean upon them, they shall not stand, but we shall, like Samson, bring them down about our own ears, and our trust shall be a spider's web. Nebuchadnezzar might have enjoyed his great Babylon, the house of his kingdom, long enough, if he had not prided himself in it; but when he came to boast of the might of his power, and of the honour of his majesty, it was just with God to seal an ejectment against him, and to turn his majesty to grass, to have his dwelling, and intercommoning with the beasts of the field. The only way to use the world as we should use it, is so to use it, as if we did not use it. It was a curse among some people, to wish

that a man might affect building ; and it is no better than a malediction to those, who so doat upon it, that, as Apollonius told the young man that was fond of his new house, they seem not so much to possess their houses, as their houses seem to possess them ; and who are so taken up with this vanity, that they bestow more time upon it, than they can afford to the service of God. Solomon seems to lie under some note for this, in that he was *seven years in building the house of the Lord*, but he was *thirteen years* in building *his own house* : but that is not without reflection. God doth not take well from his people, when they are more careful to accommodate themselves in their ceiled houses, then to repair his house.

This is a fair building, but who is within ? the master should dignifie the house, and not the house the master. It is pitty that any such places should be owls' nests. If there be no body of worth within, to give it reputation, the masons and carpenters that built the house, may challenge more honour then the master of the house. It is not the beautiful front, nor the rich furniture, but the noble heart, and the rich mind of the owner, that recommends the

house. What a miserable thing is it to consider, that for the most part, in this corrupt age wherein we live, great houses are in effect, but mere theaters of debauchery, and viciousness. The Devil keeps the house, and he that is called the master is but the signe of the tavern, or the owle in the ivy bush. It was the honour of Abraham that he kept a religious family, and commanded and taught his household to keep the way of the Lord ; but that is fanaticism now. Our great ones can tell how *to live without God in the world*, allowing themselves such a latitude in their way, as if the way of God were too narrow for their quality to walke in. They are so far from improving those that are about them in the knowledge and practice of religion, that, like people that have the plague, they delight to infect others with their vices, and so make them as ill as themselves, as if it were a point of honour to go to hell with a great traine. They have a strange perverseness in them ; they covet to have good houses, good stuff, good fare, and to have every thing good, to their very horses and dogs, but themselves, and their household. *This is a sore evil, which I have seen under*

*the sun*, namely riches, and these outward conveniences, kept for the possessors thereof to their hurt.

I have read a Rabbinical story of Melchisedec, that being warned by God to build a house for himself, for that he had yet five hundred years to live; he answered, that for so short a time it was not worth the labour. Let the author be answerable for the credit of the story: All the use that I shall make of it, is but to observe the folly of these times, wherein we that cannot calculate our lives by hundreds of years, but by the day, by the span, by the inch, are yet as sollicitous, as if we were to live to the last day of the world. We go, according to that expression in Syracedes, two ways at once; we build, as if we were to live for ever; and we eat, and drink, as if we were to dye to-morrow. The vain, as well as wicked Nero, when he had built his pallace to that vastness that the epigrammatist made it a question whether the house stood in the City of Rome, or the City of Rome in the house; he called it Transitory; and that not insignificantly, whatsoever he intended by it; for there is a transitoriness, and, as I may say,

a mortality in buildings, as well as in persons. *Man dyes; and where is he? his place shall know him no more.* The house decays, and falls; and where is that? within a few years, no body shall know the place of that any more; *the memorial of both is perished with them:* And yet such is the sottish stupidity of people, that though they see, and cannot but know these things, yet they figure to themselves imaginary perpetuities, and adopt their houses in their own names, and please themselves with the inward thought that *their dwelling places shall continue for ever unto all generations: this their way, is their folly, yet their posterity approve their sayings.*

O my soul! never look to be well seated in this low morish vale of tears. Whatever is built here, must needs sink, for want of a solid foundation, which this loose rotten ground will not admit. There is no foundation standeth sure, but that which is of God. *Except he build the house,* and the house be built upon him, upon his blessing, it will never be weather proof. Take example therefore from that feeble folk, that make their houses in the rock, build upon *that rock, which is Christ;*

and with that good and noble Eleazar, take up thy habitation in his wounds; embrace that rock, and thou shalt never want a shelter; no not in that day, when *the dens, and rocks of the mountains* shall not afford that courtesy to the greatest upon earth: and when thine *earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved, thou shalt have a building of God*, and be *cloathed upon with thy house, which is from heaven*, and shall stand for ever.



## MEDITAT. XIII.

UPON THE SIGHT OF PICTURES IN A GALLERY.

HOW many artificial miracles are there in this room? how are mine eyes at once pleased, and distracted? I may truly say, *the eye is not satisfied with seeing*. How many wayes at once, have I to look? here, without taking the pains to go abroad I can go abroad within doores, and in a small table see a whole country, diversified with hills and dales, with boscage, campagnes, cities, rivers, seas, all so perfectly represented, that a poet would make a question upon it, whether it were a natural work of art, or an artificial work of nature. In another place, I can behold a beauty drawn with that sweetness and ingenuity of aspect,

that it might pass for a picture of a mind, as well as of a face. There is a piece of devotion, set forth so movingly that it would move devotion to see it; and near unto that, a picture of a dead friend, so exactly resembling him, and with that vivacity, that if the eyes were to be the only judges, one would think it lived and spake, and were the party, and not the picture. To fill up the measure of mine admiration, all this variety is expressed by the help of a few colours, blended together, and laid on with a pencil, made up of a few hogg's haire ; such materials and utensils as an ignorant stander by would judge only fit to foule ones fingers, and spoil ones cloathes.

O my God ! whilst I feed mine eyes upon these workes of men's hands, I cannot but glorify and adore thine excellent working, who hast *created all things*, and who *dost worke all our workes in us*. Let others admire the men that made these pictures, I admire the God that made these men ; I admire that picture, as I may so call it, which was of God's own making ; the impression of his image in man. There is no piece in the world comparable to that.

Pleasant pictures, such as are merely for recreation and diversion, may seem to be inoffensive; and yet in a bedrol of sins enumerated by the prophet Isaiah, I find them mentioned, with a particular denunciation against them. There is nothing so innocent in the world, but by a too much affection may be abused, and turned into sin: I would therefore make use of the pleasures of this world, as I would do of the pictures in this gallery; walk by them, and look upon them with a transient eye, but not stop my way, nor spend my time upon them.

What is this sublunary world, but, as it were a painter's shop, wherein we see nothing but appearances, and fancies, and not any thing of reality? All the glory of it, is but a painted bubble; it swells and lookest bigg, and casts fine colours, and then breaks, and vapours into nothing; The friendship of the world, which, if any thing, should be real, is, for the most part, but so much picture and complement, but daubing; Plato calls it by a right name, rhetorical friendship; and rhetorick is no other then a kind of painted language. What are the beauties of the world, which

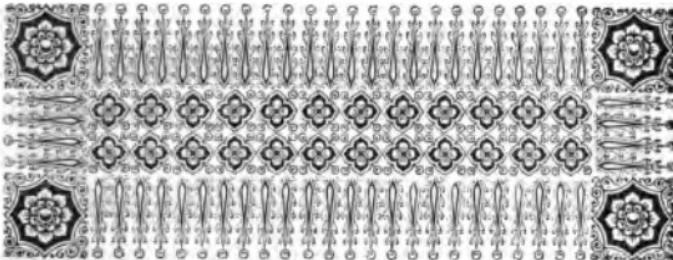
vaine men so much admire, and are so inveigled with, but, at the best, in their native favour deceitful, and vaine? and thus far resembling pictures, as all their comeliness consisteth in the due proportion of lineaments, and in the clearness and freshness of colours, which are the very elements of painting: As for others, many of them may pass for no other then living pictures; so painted, and patcht, that being compared with their pictures, which are made for them, it might be a question, which were the principals, and which the copies; for both are painted like; only of the two, their own faces may be said to be the worst, because they are not like themselves. I could wish that we had not too many Christians in picture; such hypocrites, as think it religion enough to seem religious. These are double fac'd pictures; one way so putting to shew the beauty of holiness in their profession, as if, according to the language of the Lycaonians, *God's were come down in the likeness of men;* another way so representing the ugliness of sin, in their practice, as if men were come up in the likeness of Devils. I confess, that of late, the number of these kind of pieces.

through an inundation of debauchery and profaneness among us, is so much abated, that a man with the safety of his charity, might wish there were more hypocrites stirring again; for though those painted sepulchres, might by their specious appearance deceive some; these open sepulchres do by their pestilential corruptions, infect more. Between both, all roomes are filled up; if there be fewer seemingly righteous than there were, there are the more that are openly vicious; such as have the resemblance of beasts, as of goats, swine, apes, peacocks, asses, and so we are sufficiently furnished with pictures still.

The world loves to be couensed; and, as it is in juggling, the more curious the deceit is, the more it pleaseth, though it be known to be a deceit; so the picture of the grapes, that couensed the birds, and that of the vaile, that couensed the painter, were therefore held excellent pieces, because they deceived the sight with so much art. How commendable is truth, when the mere resemblance thereof is enough to give commendation to falsehood!

Likeness to nature is the perfection of art, and likeness to the God of nature is the perfection of grace. God is the original of all-perfection, and we are expressly commanded to be *conformed unto his image*; that is, not in his power and glory; the angels affected that, and fell; nor in his knowledg and wis-dome; our first parents coveted that, and transgressed; but in his *holiness, and righteousness*; in being good, and doing good. Lord teach me to copy out thy divine nature, in those attributes wherein thou art imitable, that since I cannot be like thee as thou art the Most High; I may indeavour to resemble thee, as thou art the most lowly, and meek, and holy, and beneficent God! It is my misery, as well as my crime, that I have so long borne the image of the first man, which was of the earth, earthly; vouchsafe I beseech thee, to stampe the image of the second man, the Lord from heaven, upon my corrupt nature, and by the renewing of my mind, so transform me, that whilst others please themselves in their walk through the gallery of this world with beholding vain objects, and entertaining the lust of their eyes with them, mistaking

shadowes for substances, and pictures for realities ; calling, but not in thy sense, *things that are not, as if they were* ; I may have the eyes of my faith fixed upon thine image, as the only object of my delight ; *so shall I be satisfied, when I awake* out of this dreaming life, *with thy likeness*, and be like unto thee, when I shall see thee as thou art in glory.



## MEDITAT. XIV.

UPON THE SIGHT OE A PARRET IN A CAGE.

WHAT hath this poor bird committed,  
that she should be made a prisoner? I  
see others of our own climate soar at liberty,  
whilst this far fetcht stranger is in hold.  
Surely our vanities are sharp set, when they  
come to stoop at a feather. But what is it  
that the lust of the eyes will not fly at? to  
trade for apes, and peacocks is no new thing.  
The world hath ever been given to affect  
trifles, and the mischief is, that while we take  
them up, they take us, and so we are in the  
cage too. We shall never be able to set a just  
price upon any thing, so long as we suffer our  
fancy to be the clerk of the market.

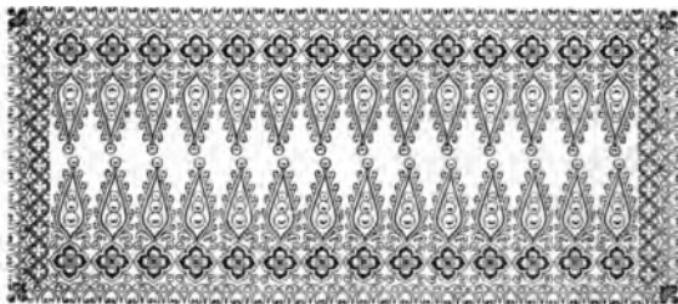
If this parret had been of a common plumage,  
she might to this day have pearcht, where she

was hatcht; now her unfortunate beauty hath betraied her to this captivity. Thus many times the things that should be for our advantage become unto us *an occasion of falling*.

But what language is this? who would not think but that the Devil were in the parret, as well as he was in the serpent? and yet, it is but a speaking into the air, and of little signification; there are such babblers to be found among us, without the help of a lanthorne, that have the art of speaking much, and saying nothing; and I wish it were a rarer thing to hear parrets speak like men, than to hear men speak like parrets.

But yet I see this good language holds but during pleasure; upon the least provocation, the bird returns to her own natural clamour again. How many are there that can bestow goodly words upon God, so long as he is pleased to please them: and yet are ready to *curse him to his face*, if he do but touch them in their persons, or estates? such trencher disciples can follow Christ, with a plausible formality, so long as they may *eat of the loaves, and be filled*; but when *persecution raiseth, are by and by offended*.

O God! whilst the world is taken with  
garish toyes, and things that cannot profit;  
let it be the delight of my soul to apprehend  
thee, and to be apprehended by thee. Teach  
me so to look upon thy works, that they may  
be a lesson, not a snare to me: So shall I,  
even in the vanity of the creation, read thy  
glory; and from the folly of the world receive  
some instruction.



## MEDITAT. XV.

UPON HEARING GOOD MUSICK.

I CANNOT but think that soul out of tune, that is not affected with musick. For though I am not of the opinion of that fidling philosopher, that defined the soul to be a harmony; yet I do really believe, that there is nothing that striketh so immediately, and incorporeally upon the powers thereof, as musick doth. It insinuateth into the spirits, and hath such a secret familiarity with them, that it disposeth them to variety of passions, conformable to the several changes and inflexions thereof. It stilleth the child at the nurse's breast, and layeth it asleep; it cheareth the labourer at his work, the gally slave at his

oar ; it rouzeth the souldier in the field, and exciteth him to action. History telleth us of Pythagoras his practice of physick, by musick, and of his curing of diverse sicknesses by that meanes ; and experience verifieth the possibility thereof, in the recovery of those that are stung with the tarantula, by the same way. As to the operation thereof upon the mind, every one almost, that hath ears to hear, may be called to witness, whether some aires and tunes do not sensibly attrist, others comfort ; some move, others moderate affections. To say nothing of those fables of Orpheus, and Amphion ; the one reported to have charmed birds and beasts ; the other said to have moved stocks and stones by their harmonious accents ; the moral whereof tended only to signify the power of perswasion, and the efficacy thereof to reduce brutish, and ignorant people to civility, and cohabitation, and politie ; though withall inferring, in that allusion to musick, that even in those rude times of old, there was a sense of the operation of it upon the spirits and natures of men ; for which cause both Plato and Aristotle recommended the use of it, in their states and common weals, as beneficial

to the regulation of manners. It may be enough to say, that there is a kind of divine power in harmony, working even upon those spirits, which are of a nature exalted above the spirits of men : this, sufficiently witnessed by the word of God, in those famous examples of Saul, and Elisha. What the reason of these strange effects should be, is beyond the compass of reason to imagine. Lord ! whilst this harmony delights mine ear, let the consideration of thine infinite wisdome, whereby thou hast made all things in number, weight and measure, in a harmony to be seen, affect my heart ; that so while I admire thee in what I hear and see ; I may adore thee in what I cannot comprehend.

How ravishing is this pleasure ; and how is my soul elevated with it, even to an extasy ? that whether it be in the body, or out of the body, me thinks I can hardly say ; certainly there is nothing of greater use for the raising, and sweetning of our affections towards God, then the singing of his high praises in psalmes, and hymnes, and spiritual songs. The primitive Christians were so taken with it, that in the times of persecution, at their conventicles

before day, they could not forbear making *their melody to the Lord*, though many times they were discovered by it, to their extream hazard. It is written by a Father, that in the little town of Bethleem, near unto which he lived, there was nothing almost to be heard, but that heavenly musick, resounding in all places; from the shop to the plough; there was no mirth, but in singing psalmes. O the goodness of God! who knowing our infirmity, how much more we are inclined to that which delights, than to that which profiteth, hath so contrived it; that by borrowing from melody that pleasure which toucheth our ears, he doth by the smoothness and softness thereof, as by a holy stealth, convey a treasure of good things into our hearts; so that whilst we think we sing, we learn; and in doing that wherein we delight, we are taught that, whereby we profit! It is observable that the sweetness of musick consisteth in discords, high, low, mean; there can be no harmony in unisons. If there be not a distinction in sounds, *how shall it be known, what is piped, or harped?* but then those discords must be proportionately accorded, or the sound will be ingrate, and

odious ; and it is no otherwise in the point of government ; there must be a distinction of degrees observed ; a superiority, and an inferiority ; with a due order held between them ; every one retaining his proper place ; the treble must not be strung, where the base should be, nor the mean where the treble should be : every one must be kept in his proper tone, neither too flat, nor too sharpe ; one pin should not be wound up too high, nor another let down too low, which was noted by Apollonius to have been Nero's fault in government, but every one in his peculiar station, must be kept in a due harmony : So we see octaves, or diapazons, though so many notes distant, yet, as by a secret sympathy, correspond the one to the pulse and touch of the other, and make the sweetest concord. Parity, at the best, is but a kind of orderly confusion ; there can be no musick in it.

But there be some strings, which are called false ones, which by reason of the inequality, and unevenness of their making, will never be brought to accord with the rest, but will perpetually jar. It were well if we had not too many spirits of that uneven jarring temper,

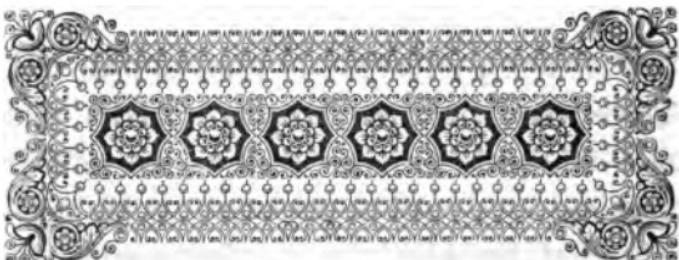
that nothing will ever work them to any agreement. I would they were cut off that trouble the harmony.

But what a deal of time is spent in tuning, before we can come to have any musick? and how easily and quickly is that delight of the son's of men interrupted, by the slipping or breaking of a string, or the mistopping of a fret? The case is alike in our most pleasing earthly enjoyments; there is hardly any pleasure we take, but it costs us pains to take it; and when we have it, every little accident is enough to discompose it. If we set our hearts upon it, and make it our business, we stop upon a wrong fret; and if we scrue it up too high in our estimation, or let it down too low, to the service of base unworthy ends, we run the hazard of making it break, or slip, or yield no sound at all to please us. There is nothing more sure, then that there is nothing sure under the sun.

O my soul! if there be so much pleasure to be taken in that which we call musick here, which, when all comes to all, is but a sound, arising from the percussion of a few guts, or wire strings fastened to a concave frame or

instrument of wood, moved by the fingers of men, and it may be accompanied with their voices ; raise thyself upon the wings of faith and love, to the contemplation of that truly melodious harmony, whereof thou shalt, by the grace of God, be a partaker in the quire of heaven without interruption to all eternity ; when the voices of saints and angells shall be conjoyned with the harpes of God in everlasting hallelujas *unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever,* and ever. Lord, I have had enough, and enough of the scraping of this world ; which although it may for the time afford some pleasure to mine ear, yet it is so momentary, and to my soul so unsatisfactory ; that I humbly beseech thee to fit me for a better consort, even that celestial one ; where all mouths shall be filled with thy praise, and with thy honour ; and where my lips shall rejoice, when I sing unto thee, and my soul which thou hast redeemed ! Here the best of thy servants have been weary of their crying, there the meanest of them shall never be weary of their singing ; they shall rest from their labours, but they shall never rest from their *Holy Holy Holy'es, to the Lord*

*God Almighty ;* that labour shall be their rest.  
There shall need no keeping time in that  
blessed musick, for none shall be out in their  
part, and time shall be no more. O my soul !  
what dost thou here ? I waite for thy salvation,  
O Lord ! but Lord, how long ?



## MEDITAT. XVI.

UPON THE SIGHT OF A PLEASANT GARDEN.

THERE is no human pleasure that hath so much of antiquity, and of the state of innocence in it, as the pleasure of a garden. The first notice, and mention that we have of pleasure in the world, is with reference to that garden in Eden, which was of God's own plantation, and wherein he gave entertainment to our first parents, as in a room drest up on purpose to receive them, and to give them delight. But yet, all was not made for mere delight there; there was that which *was good*, *good for food*, as well as that which *was pleasant to the sight*. All the pleasures that are of God's making, are good; vanity came in with sin.

How happy might we have been in that primitive condition, if sin had not corrupted it? when without fears for to-day, or cares for to-morrow, we might have lived immortally blessed, in a constant communion with God, and in the affluence of all good things in him; when our roses should have had no briars; when our pleasures should have had nothing but an innocent sweetness in them, and we might have gathered them without scratching our fingers, without raveling our consciences: when *the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden*, would have been an invitation to us to have walked with him, and not a teravour to have driven us from his presence. O Adam! what hast thou done? what a happy estate hast thou forfeited, for an inconsiderable trifle! How hast thou by one bit of an apple, a sower one, set both thine own, and thy *childrens' teeth on edge*, to all thy succeeding generations? But blessed be God, who hath sent his Son Jesus Christ, *the second Adam, the Lord from heaven*, who by the merits of his sufferings hath redeemed that forfeiture, and infeoffed us in a better estate, than we were in before the fall: whereby we who were of the *earth*

*earthly*, are made conformable to *the image of the heavenly*; and intitled to a celestial paradise, into which no serpent shall ever be able to enter, and out of which we shall never be ejected.

It is worth the noting, that if our first parents had not transgressed, but had continued in their imparadised condition, they should not have enjoyed an idle lazy felicity. God did not put them into the garden, as we put beasts into a good pasture, to graze and batten; or as he placed the *Leriathan* in the sea, *to play therein*; but *to dress, and keep it*; to employ their time in doing good in it; and that exercise of their vocation, should have been unto them there, as the doing of God's will is to the blessed angels in heaven, a maine part of their beatitude. It is a comfortable thing to live in a good vocation; and indeed, without that, we cannot properly be said to live. A calling, or vocation, is, in the language of the law, tearmed an addition; but it is such an addition, as a figure is to a cyphar; it is that, that makes us something in the world; and without which, the greatest that are, are but like nulls in a character, only remarkable,

because they signify nothing : O my soul ! consider this ; it is better to dye, than not to live ; and they live not, that live to no end. Make it my buisiness so to live, as that when God shall call thee, thou maist be found in the way of thy calling, doing thy Lord's buisiness ; which is the way to be admitted into *the joy of thy Lord.*

It is written of our blessed Saviour, that he affected a garden, and frequented it often with his disciples. God doth not prohibit us the liberty and free use of lawful pleasures, so long as we do not set our hearts and affections upon them, but make use of them, as we do of our gardens for recreation, and diversion, and not to dwell in ; and so long as we look up to him in the enjoyment of them, as the God of our comforts, and have our rejoicing in him. O my soul ! take him whom thou lovest for an example, and study to improve this delight to a sanctified use : when thou art here, in company, to edify others, as he did his disciples, by a holy communication, ministering grace unto them ; and when alone, to spend thy time, and exercise thy thoughts, as he also did in meditation, and praier. Nay let his

burial and resurrection, both which were in a garden, be remembrances unto thee, to put thee in mind, in the midst of thy delights, that thou art *implanted with him into death*; that like as he was *raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father*, even so thou also shouldest be *conformed to the likeness of his resurrection, to walk in newness of life*. Let these thoughts be thine entertainments, and thy garden will be so much paradise unto thee. He that walkes with God, can never want a good walke, and good company. There is no garden well contrived, but that which hath an Enoch's walk in it.

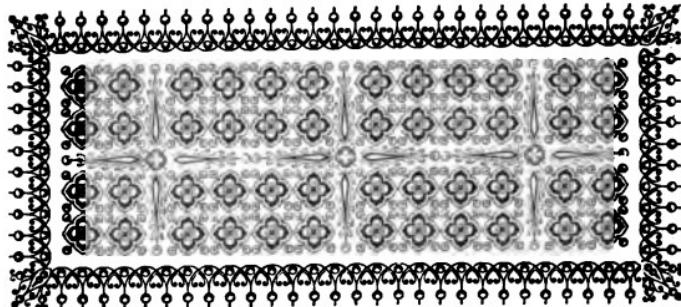
How cleanly are these allies kept? and how orderly are the hedges cut, and the trees prouned and nailed, and not an irregular twig left? there is no such care taken for the weeds, and bushes, and brambles that grow abroad. God is careful to preserve the garden of his Church in all decency and order; and will not suffer it to be overgrown with errors or prophaness; but is like a goood husbandman, if I may say so with all humbleness, ever at work about it; either weeding out what his heavenly hand hath not planted; or if need be

lopping, and cutting off luxuriant branches, that bear not fruit; or purging those that do bear, *that they may bring forth more fruit*. But as for those that are without, he lets them alone to grow wild, not giving himself so much trouble, to speak after the manner men, as either to dig about them with his chastisements, or to dung and enrich them with his mercies, but leaving them to their own barrenness, and to the curse attending it. God in his judgement begins at his own house; and if so, what shall the end be of those, that are not of his household? *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*, though for correction and edification; but it is infinitely more fearful and horrid, to fall out of his hands; to be, as without the pale of his providence, left *to bring forth fruit unto ourselves*. Why should those that are of the Church of God be discouraged under their crosses and afflictions, when as they are but the effects of his divine husbandry, whereby to meliorate, and improve them? their sufferings, are but signes of his owning them to be true plants of his own setting; and that they grow where they should do. Lord do any thing to me,

rather than nothing: Let thy pruning knife be never so sharp and cutting, it can do me no hurt, so long as it tends to make me good.

At present this is a sweet place, but what will it be a few months hence? at what time the liberality of nature will, for this season, be spent, and her charity to us, will have reduced her to a bare condition? When winter is come, all this verdure and fragrancy is gone; and we may go seek the garden, in the garden; and the place thereof shall not know it. How vain and transitory, and fugative, are all earthly pleasures! like flowers, they wither, even whilst we are smelling to them, and *perish in the using*; the *fashion of the world*, as well as of the garden, *passeth away*. It was well said by a heathen, that in this inferior visible world, there is nothing to be seen, but the shadows and appearances of things, but that in the invisible, in the superior world, there are solids and substances to be found, as in their proper region. In vain do we look for any thing in any thing here, when there is a superscription of *vanity*, written upon *all things under the sun*. If any body would know what vanity is, the word of God will tell him, it is something less

than nothing ; if any would be satisfied what nothing is ; I can tell him, it is nothing ; and it is so, because it is not, because it hath no being. He is wise that knows how to take things as they are, in their true entity. The world can never deceive us, so long as we are led by truth, and not by opinion. He is not confined in the receiving of mony, that takes brass coine according to the value of the mettal, and as brass coine. O my soul ! learn this wisdome ; use pleasures, as pleasures ; and whilst thou laiest hold on these follies, do as Solomon did, retaine the wisdome to know they are but follies. Do not set thine eyes upon that which is not ; or which, if, in any sense, it be, is never at such a consistence, but that even whilst it is, it may be said, it was ; so fluid, that like water, the more it is embraced and grasped, the more it slips away. But look up, and consider ; the things here below, which *are seen*, *are temporary*, and of short continuance, but the things which are above, *and which are not seen*, *are eternal*. Those, and none but those, are the true *pleasures*, *which are at God's right hand for evermore*.



## MEDITAT. XVII.

UPON THE SIGHT OF A FAIR HORSE, WELL MANNAGED.

WHAT a noble generous creature is this ? and how answerable to that character of a brave goodly horse, which was delivered by God himself out of the whirlwind ? His crest seems to be *cloathed with thunder* ; *the glory of his nostrils is terrible* ; *he swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage* ; and *saith among the trumpets ha, ha* ; *he mocketh at fear* ; *he paweth, and rejoiceth in his strength* ; and *is ready to go on to meet the armed men, as if he smelt the battle afar off, and heard the thunder of the captains, and the shouting*. God seemeth, if I may so speak, to take pleasure in describing this piece of his

own workmanship, setting forth, as in the description of the Leviathan, his parts, and his power, and his comely proportion. Where God thinks it not fit to conceal the commendation of his works, they ought to be had in remembrance, and to be glorified by us. *All thy works praise thee O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee in all thy works.* O my soul! praise thou the Lord, as in other things, so in this particular operation of his hands, which he himself hath praised, and ranked with *the chief of his wayes.*

It may be matter of just admiration, even to the most knowing persons, to consider how the strength and fierceness of this creature is subdued, and subjected to the service and management of a weak infirme man; who is so far unable to cope with such an enemy upon even tearmes, that he cannot withstand the kick of his foot. *Lord what is man, that thou shouldst thus magnify him, and put the fear, and dread of him upon all thine inferior creatures, and deliver them into his hand?* Certainly they are injurious to nature, or rather to the God of nature, that think man ill dealt with, because he is not so long lasting as most

vegetables are; nor so strong and active as many sensitive creatures are: not considering that the great Creator aiming at a higher end in man, is in these lower faculties less intent and elaborate; as having in that excellent gift of reason, wherewith he is indued, not only repaired and compensated those defects unto him, but *exalted him above all other creatures*; and inabled him thereby to command their parts and qualities, wherein they exceed him, and to make use of them for his own service.

But what merit is there in man, that should thus mount him, and set him on horse-back? It is true, in his creation, God innobled him, by impressing the signature of his own image upon him, and by giving him that *dominion over the workes of his own hands*; but *man being in honour continued not*, but by his prevarication fell; whereby he became not only *like the beasts that perish*, so that they might say, *man is become like one of us*; but inferiour to them, and subject to their annoyance, to be mischeived, and maistered, and, as it were, to be ridden by them. All other creatures retaine the honour and dignity of their creation: all that host, so the word of God calls it, all

that army of creatures, doth punctually observe the discipline, and pass upon the duty imposed on them by their Maker; and act accordingly: but man only, who was commissionated general of that army, could not command himself, but being misgoverned by his own corrupt affections, did imbase, and abbasterdise that noble kind wherewith God had honour'd him. O the riches of free grace! the reprobate angels sinned but once, and were immediately, and irrecoverably damned; the sensitive creatures never sinned, and yet are subdued to *the bondage of corruption*; Man, whom God had made little inferiour to the elect angels, and superiour to all the works of his hands in this sublunary world, he doth nothing, and can *do nothing of himself, as of himself*, but sin in every *imagination of the thoughts of his heart*, and hath thereby rendered himself justly liable to death and hell: and yet, as if God had loved him better than himself, it pleased him to give himself, his only begotten Son, coessential, coequal with himself, to be a ransome for his sins, and by the all-sufficiency of that redemption, and attonement, to re-invest him in his former command here, and to intitle

him to *the kingdom of heaven* hereafter. *O the depth!* How much should man love, to whom so much is given, and so much forgiven?

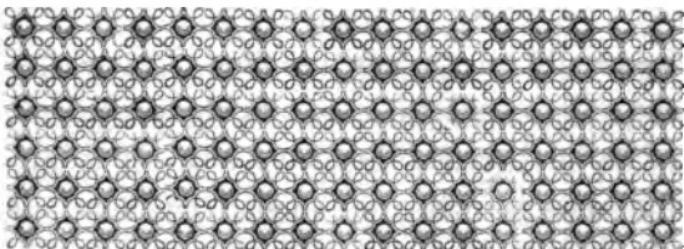
I cannot but have a charity for those poor ignorant people, who upon the first sight of horsemen, took the men and the horses to be but one and the same creature. But taking them as they are distinct; who would not think, but that, as it was in *the vision of the living creatures and the wheels*, the spirit of the one, were in the other, and that one soul actuated both? So doth the beast answer to every, the least motion of the rider, and obey his mannage. What is this but an emblem of sense guided by reason? This horse may pass for the representative of a well governed man. The great moralist made that use of the description of a brave serviceable horse in Virgil, to apply it to the character of a gallant person; professing that if he were to commend Cato, he could not express his constant, regular, noble carriage in better terms. How beautiful is virtue, and a well commanded courage in a man, when the brave shaddow of that gallantry, though so far short, is so well becoming, even in a beast?

But we have a caveat given us, not to be *as the horse*; which is exemplified in our turning to our own precipitate courses, as the horse rusheth heedlessly into the battle; and in our pampering and fomenting our corrupt affections, when, like *fed horses*, we *neigh after our lusts*. What a beast is man, when he suffers his sense to transport him beyond his reason! Surely, so much worse than *the horse, and mule, which have no understanding*, as he hath an understanding, which he himself hath imbrutisht and abased below his species. He is brutish, as the prophet saith, in his very knowledge. The man may ride the horse, but so long as the sense rides the reason, the beast rides the man. In vain doth he raine in his horse with bit and bridle, who lets himself loose to an unbridled conversation. O my God! I have a natural restyness in me, which I beseech thee to break; and therefore, whensoever my follies would fly out, and attempt to run away with me; use me like myself, *a whip for the horse, and a rod for the fooles back*; and if I will not hear the voice, let me feel the smart of it. *Blessed is he whom thou chastenest, and teachest.*

A horse is a plain dealing creature, and, though very serviceable, yet, if provoked, as ready to cast a king as a beggar; he is no courtier; and therefore it was upon that account, that Carneades advised Princes and great men to practise horsemanship, that they might be used to something that would not flatter them. I hold it but decent to be serviceable to the quality of public and eminent persons; but he that will be ridden by his humours, must pardon me if I esteem him to be of something a lower degree than a horse, and worthy to be spur galled if he do not, at the least, try their horsemanship that back him, whether they can keep the saddle, and sit fast, or no.

I find it written, as an expression of honour to the house of Judah, that God had made them as his goodly horse in the battel; and yet in other places it is said, that *a horse is but a vain thing*, and, without the divine protection, utterly unable *to deliver any by his great strength*. Surely God is a jealous God, tender of his honour; and though he do allow and appoint means for our defence and preservation, yet he will not by any means that

we should trust in any, but him. The woe, is not to those that ride, but to those that *stay on horses*, because they are many, and strong. Let who so will, put their confidence *in chariots, and in horses*; *I will remember the name of the Lord my God, and stay upon him. He is a sure refuge, a present help: The horse is prepared against the day of battel, but safety is of the Lord.*



## MEDITAT. XVIII.

UPON THE SIGHT OF BOWLERS IN A GREEN.

WHAT an emblem of the world have we here in this green! what making and abetting of parties! What casting to attain ends! some one way, and some another; according as they are biassed; and most are short, or over, or wide; and few there be that get to ly neer the mark they aime at. All are very buisy, and clamorous; and yet none enjoy the sport so much, as those that have no part in it, but are standing by, and dissinterested persons. It is a priviledge next to that of God and his angels, to be a spectator in the world. Lord, whilst others affect to be gamsters here, let me be in the number of those that look on; or rather of those that look up; so shall I have a double advantage,

both in my security from loosing any thing here, where I adventure nothing; and as I shall be sure to winn all that I can desire hereafter, whilst I *set mine affections on things above!*

It is a measuring cast, whether it be better sport to see the bowling, or the bowlers; of the two, the last would make one laugh most; and therefore I think the best part of the sport lyes on their side. Certainly there cannot be a better jest seen, than the antick figures into which they screw themselves; nor a greater absurdity heard, than the sensible advice that they cast after their senseless bowles; now and then, to have them *rub*; now and then, to have them *fly*; and to observe their impatience many time, to a degree of desperation, if they chance not to run correspondently to their flexures and cringes. What is the difference in point of folly, between asking council of a stock, and giving council to a block? The moral of it may serve to informe us, that all passions in their excesses, are unbecoming. But where is the fault, if the bowle do go wrong? is it not in the hand that misguided it? and yet rather than faile, we

can lay the blame, either upon the lightness, or heaviness, or biass of the bowle. We are naturally loth to own what we do amiss, and are willing to discharge our errors upon others ; though never so much guilty ourselves. We know whose plea it was, *the woman did it*, and *the Serpent did it*, but that would not acquit.

It is true, though a bowle be never so well delivered from the hand, it may meet with such rubs in the way, as may either retard or divert it, and therefore there must be a consideration had accordingly, to give it a fit strength, to carry it through those accidents. They do well that begin well, and ground their designes well ; but if they do not allow for a rub in their cast, it is odds if ever they get home.

It is a great advantage, especially to an unskilful bowler, to have a knowing friend to give him ground ; and it is no otherwise in the management of affairs in the world. The greatest and most prudent persons that have lived in their generations, have been most careful in this point, to have men of advice about them. To say nothing of those Persian

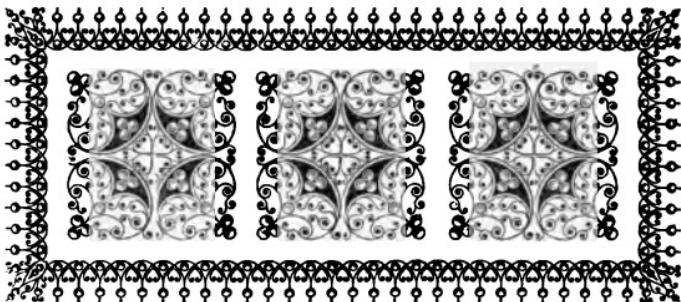
monarchs, that had their counsellors, whom they called their eyes, to guide them in the conduct of their government; nor of the Asyrian Ahasuerus, whose manner it was, in matters of law and judgment, to consult his wise men, that knew the times; David, *the man after God's own heart*, had his Ahitophel, an oraculous counsellor, if he had had honesty to his wisdome; Solomon the wisest of all men, was not without his Etham, and Haman, and Chaliol, and Darda; and if Rehoboam would have taken that ground which was given him by those *old men* that had *stood before his father*, he might have done well; but his biass wheeled him to *the young men, that were brought up with him*, and so by their misguiding him, he lost ten tribes at a cast. *Where no council is, people fall, but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.* How safe and happy are they that have God to give them ground, who is the Counsellor; and that can hear his voice directing them, and telling them, *this is the way, walk in it!* O my God! give me a hearing heart, according to the praier of that wise and royale servant of thine, *that thy pure commandment may*

*enlighten mine eyes, to discerne the way wherein I shall go; so shall I be sure not to cast away mine endeavours, whilst I follow thine advice, who art both my guide and my way, and the only way of truth.*

But it is an unlucky thing to have a bowle lye short in a good ground; for thereby, it doth not only loose the cast itself, but it becometh a stumbling block unto others: We have many such short casts made in the world, by those who begin well, *in the spirit*, and, with the lawyer in the Gospel, run far *toward the kingdom of God*, but then *grow weary of well doing*, and *end in the flesh*; in Agrippa's *Almost*; whereby they are both losers themselves, and hindrances to those that would willingly fling home; and so become answerable both for their own, and for other men's sins. That condition must needs be sad, that cannot be amended but by knocking up.

It is a part of the sport to see, how by a lucky hit, an unlucky bowle may sometimes come to lie neer, which without that chance, would have been far enough off. There be such bowlers among us, that get more by justing and knocking, than by fair play.

But yet it is here, as it is abroad in the world, the best bowles may have the worst luck; all the huddle is about them, and none are struck at, but those that lie next the master. O my soul! whilst others, with so much trouble and hazard to themselves, are casting at greatness, and honour, let it be thy buisness to aime at goodness, which is indeed the only true greatness; and then, however the world may strike at thee, even to the turning of thee out of the green, the greatest blow it can give thee, will but make thee a toucher in heaven.



## MEDITAT. XIX.

OF HUNTING.

IT is observed by some, that hunting hath an ill name in Scripture; and that we do not read in all those sacred records, of any one good man, that did affect it. Nimrod the *mighty*, and *the first hunter*, who was in after-times deified in memory of it, under the name, as some write, of that constellation which we call Orion, with the dog-star at his heeles; and Esau, the cunning hunter, are both therein sufficiently branded, the one for his oppression, the other for his profaneness: the very tearm of hunting is seldom therein used, but in an evil sense; so we read of *violent men, hunting one another*; of *evil, hunting violent men*; of the *adulteress, hunting the precious life*; of

*false prophetesses, hunting souls.* All which notwithstanding, it will not consequently follow, that hunting is in itself illicite, because the name of it is thus applied, or because the thing itself hath been, and is by many abused. To say nothing of those arguments used by some philosophers in justification of it; as that it is a manly exercise, whereby men's spirits are quickned and sharpened, and their bodyes corroborated and hardened, and fitted to undergo the service of the field; and that it is but just and natural for men to take this freedom, upon the account of their *dominion over the creatures*, which are naturally theirs: It may be enough to say, that God hath in his word permitted it, with this only caution, that the blood of those creatures that were taken, and killed in hunting, *should be powerd out, and covered with the dust*; which was but the same prohibition that was given against the eating of any flesh whatsoever, *with the life thereof*. God's permission is the best commission we have for the use of any pleasures, and therefore may suffice to authorize this. I might alledge out of history, that Saint John the beloved disciple, is reported to

have been a great lover of this sport, as some proof that a good man might, and that no less than a holy pen-man of the Scripture did affect it. But I pass it by. O my God! thou knowest that our fraile and weak bodyes have need of recreations and divertisments, as well as of food and raiment, to preserve and sustaine them in a good habitude; let me not live to abuse this liberty, which thou art pleased to allow, either by over affecting it, or by turning my delight in it to a sanguinary wantonness; but do thou teach me by thy grace, so to use thy creatures, in a moderate, sober way, as having a dominion, but not a tiranny over them; and that it may be my principal end by this exercise to improve my health and strength, to the advantage of thy service; that there may be an inscription of holiness upon the belly, as well as upon the bowels; upon my pleasures, as well as upon my most serious, or necessary actions, so as whatever I do, whether I hunt, or whether I *eat or drink*, *I may do all to thy glory!*

What a breach of the peace hath sin made in the world! not only between God, and man, and man and man, but even between

brute creatures. Had it not been for that common make bate, the *lion and the kid*, the *wolfe and the lamb*, the hound and the hare, might have *laine down together* as good friends. It is a sad thing to consider that sin is the master of the game among us, and that we are faine to be beholding to the Devil for our sport. O my God! let the sense of this, lay such a restraint upon mine affections, that whilst I follow this sport, which is occasioned by the entrance of sin, I may never be so foolish as to make a sport of sin, but that I may make it my game to *hunt that out*; and to destroy that, which would otherwise pursue me to my destruction.

There be several sorts of chases in the world; some of beasts of prey; others weak, harmless creatures. The first was noble, and had a gallantry in it; when men took pleasure in freeing their countries from what was noxious and destructive; but as people grew degenerate and base, so they became weary of sporting with danger, and contented themselves with smaller game, such as they might play at with more safety, and now the poor deer and hare, do in effect pay for all. They

that do least hurt, suffer most. It is no otherwise in the course and practise of the world; wherein those of strength and power, instead of opposing others that are in a capacity to resist their violence, do commonly turn upon such as can make least defence, and devour those that are more righteous than themselves. There is game enough in the world besides, but the poor man that *departeth from evil*, is the easiest prey.

But what an insatiety is there in all these delights, which with so much paines and clamour we pursue! when we have taken what we hunted through thick and thin, the roasting comes to a poor business. All the delight seemes to be in the paines we take. Our very pleasures, as well as our cares, grow *in the thorny ground*, as it is said in the parable of the seed. There is no end in worldly desires, but even when we have what we would, we find we have not what we would! O my soul! let this very dissatisfaction teach thee that there is nothing here worth the desiring. The game we hunt would not be in so much danger, but for the scent thereof, which it carries with itself, and yet leaves

behind it, and upon which it is followed. As we hunt other creatures, so we ourselves are hunted by the *roaring lion*, *the Devil*, that *seeks to devour us*; and yet we might be safe enough from him, if it were not for the corruption that is in our natures; but every man hath an evil man within him, and there lyes the scent, upon which we are pursued. *Deliver me, O Lord! from the evil man*; from that evil man, which is myself in myself, and I shall not fear what the Devil can do unto me!

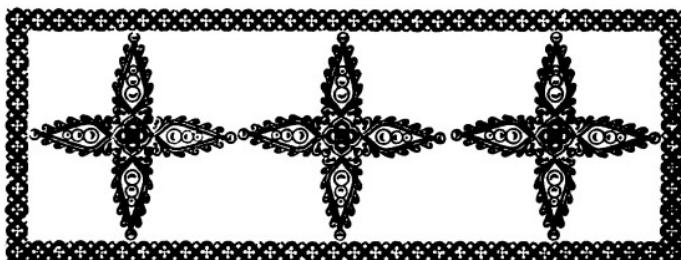
I have often seen a hunted hare, when she is hard run, get into a flock of sheep, and put the hounds to a loss, by keeping among them in their walk. O my soul! as thou desirest to save thyself from the destroyer, follow the example of that poor creature; go thy way by the foot-steps of Christ's flock, and keep close to the shepheard's tents, so shalt thou put that enemy of thine to a loss, and remaine safe under the protection of *the great Shepheard of the sheep*, who *will in no wise cast thee out*, and *out of whose hand none can pluck thee*.

It is remarkable that there is nothing that hunts so like a hare, as a lion; both using alike the same arts and doublings, when they

are chaced. There is a coincidence in extreames: Fear and courage may many times act alike, and are not incompatible in the same subject. One may generate the other. Desperation, which is the depth of fear, doth many times, being sharpened by necessity, excite courage, and beget hope. Temerity, which is the hight of courage, doth often, from experience of danger, breed caution, which is a discreet fear. Lord grant me such a sanctified commixture of both these affections in the temper of my mind, that in the greatest trials and dangers, when I am most put to preserve myself, I may use no other doublings than such as may consist with the hare and the lion, with a fear of thee, and a bouldness in thee; that even at *what time I am afraid, I may trust in thee*; so shall I whilst I fear thee, fear nothing!

It is a great disadvantage in hunting, to meet with too much game, and to have several hares on foot at once; and it is no otherwise in the pursuit of worldly affairs; they that buisy themselves in starting several designes and projects together, do nothing but change and run from one thing to another, and so

come home with their labour for their pains ; like those pragmatical Thessalonians, they are buisy bodies working not at all ; all they do, comes to nothing. Lord, whilst others loose themselves in the vanity of their own imaginations, and are incumbred in many things, and those, for the most part, far from any tendency to the service of Christ ; let it be the delight of my soul, and the endeavour of my life, to hunt after *the one thing needful*, and to fix my choice upon that *good part, which shall not be taken away from me*. O my God ! thou art the only adequate object of my desires ; thou hast promised that *thou wilt be found of those that seek thee*, and that thou wilt not be sought in vain. My soul follows hard after thee ; thee, and none but thee, O let me find thee, and be found in thee ! So shall I at once, take and be taken ; apprehend, and be apprehended, and in both be made everlasting happy.



## MEDITAT. XX.

### OF FISHING.

OF all recreations, fishing is the most agreeable to contemplative spirits, as being a sedate quiet sport; free from those clamours, and disturbances of the senses, which usually accompany other pleasures of the field; and not so ingrossing the mind, but that withal it is at a freedom to entertain itself with good thoughts, in which respect, it is by some of the school preferred before hunting.

But yet how delightful so ever it may be as a recreation, it is but a poor business to make a trade of; and if we were called to it under that notion, we should quickly be ready to leave our nets, to follow a more beneficial vocation: Such is the power and operation of fancy upon the will, that by representing the

pleasure of freedom unto it, which it naturally affecteth, it can induce it to like or dislike the same thing, more or less, according to the liberty or constraint, wherewith it acteth it. There is a pleasure in willing.

But how hath God honoured this despicable trade, and the followers of it, with his presence, and miracles ! passing by *the wisemen after the flesh*, the mighty, the noble ; and choosing a few simple, weak, mean fishermen, with their cloathes hardly dry upon their backs, to promulgate the glad tidings of his Gospel to every creature ; calling them from mending their nets, to mend, and reforme the world ! O the infinite wisdom of God ! O the unresistable strength of his weakness. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ ; and *let no flesh glory in his presence !*

It hath even been the ambition of the Devil, to be like the Most High, in the immitation of his actings. As Christ hath his fishers of men, so hath that wicked one his ; who many times, to conceal themselves from the eye of the world, and that there may be the less perspective into their methods, do croude into Christ's boat, and put hard to have an oare in it, as if

they were of his gang; transforming themselves into his ministers of righteousness. It is the misery of the sons of men, that many times they are not so careful, as they should be, to *try the spirits whether they be of God*, or no; whether it be a good, or a bad angel that is *stirring in the waters*: And hence it is, that for want of distinguishing rightly between the motions of the Spirit of Christ, and the suggestions and illusions of the Devil, it comes to pass that so many fall into the *snares of the Devil*, and are caught by him, as the *fishes that are taken in an evil net*.

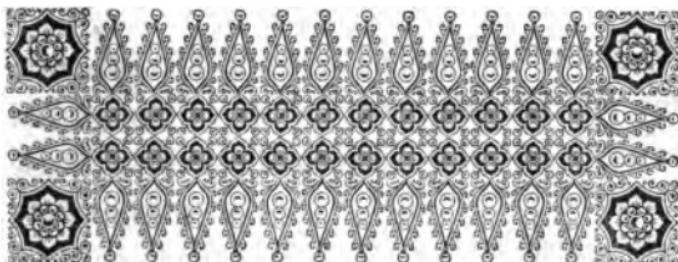
They that are masters at this sport, do not, when a fish bites, immediately twitch him up, but having struck him, give him line, and let him seemingly run away with the baite, whereby to hook him the more surely, and at last, with the more ease to draw him up. It is no otherwise, when a sinner bites at a temptation, and the Devil strikes him, he is contented to give him scope to enjoy *the pleasure of his sin for a season*, but it is to have the surer hold of him, and to make a prey of him with the less trouble.

When fish are inclined to bite, a small thing,

a flie, or the very likness of a flie, an artificial flie, will be a sufficient bate for them. We are ready to smile at the simplicity of those poor creatures, to see them so easily deceived ; and yet do not consider with what facility we ourselves are taken, when we catch at the worthless vanities of the world ; and are taken with the appearances of honour, riches, pleasures, which are deceitful, and have nothing in them. But that is true, which the plain dealing confessor told Philip the Second of Spain, who doted upon a lady, that was none of the handsomest. It is all one to the Devil, how, or by what meanes he takes a man, whether with an ill favoured face, or with a beauty, his pleasure lyes in the taking ; and those are welcomest to him that will be damned with the most ease.

It is ordinary with those that delight in fishing, to bait certain places where the fish are aptest to frequent ; but in this point, the Devil hath the advantage above all others, that he hath his baits in all places ; court, country, pulpit, bench ; fitted for all conditions, all ages, all complexions ; agreeable to *all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of*

*the eyes, and the pride of life.* Who can escape his snares? O my God! when I reflect upon my own condition, how miserable do I find it to be! Which of all his baits that have fallen within my reach, have I not bitten at and swallowed? And now how many hooks have I within me? Where is the sweetness, where is the pleasure, where is the profit of those sins *whereof I am now ashamed?* Now by a sad experience I find, that as I have caught the baits, so the hookes have caught me. Who shall deliver me? Who can? None can and will but that gracious ever blessed Redeemer, who gave himself a ransom for me, and by his own death hath made a way for me to escape; who bath not only freed me, but taken him that took me; and that by being taken himself by him; *conquering him by death, that had the power of death;* and by the advantage of that victory, leading my *captivity captive.* What shall I render? *To Him be all glory, and praise, and thanks!*



## MEDITAT. XXI.

UPON THE SUN-SETTING.

BY what insensible degrees, and yet how speedily, bath the sun travelled his day's journey? it was but some hours since, that he arose, and shewed himself to our hemisphere from the uttermost end of heaven, and he hath already finished his circuit to the other end thereof. Certainly *day unto day uttereth speech*, and in their silent language seem to put me in remembrance, that I am going, or rather, as Job phraseth it, posting my circuit too from *earth to earth*: From the dust out of which I was originally taken, to the dust into which I must finally be resolved.

When I look back to the morning of my life, and consider my time past, methinks it is but a very little while since I came out of the

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chamber of my mother's womb. How soon is the tale of threescore and seven years told? Shall I say, according to the impropriety of some languages, that I have so many years? Nay rather I may say, I have them not; according to the expression of Hezekiah, though something in another sense, so much of *mine age is departed from me*; and is as dead, as nothing to me. None can say *he is the same yesterday, and to day*, but He that is *for ever*. How is my time stolen away, and so much of myself gone with it! Before I can well take notice what a clock it is with me, I find myself in the evening, or rather the night of mine age. It is a sad thing for a man to sleep out his best time, as it was fabled of Epimenides, and not to wake till he be old; and then he bid the world good Morrow, when the world may bid him good night. Lord! since the time past is so fluid and transitory, that it is gone before I can say what it is; and the time to come so uncertain, that I *know not what may be to-morrow*; no not what the next moment may bring forth; teach me, I beseech thee, so to husband my time present, that in this my day, or rather in this my now, which

is all I can call mine, I may so live to thy praise and glory, as I would live mine eternity hereafter, which, without past, or future, is an everlasting present !

The motion of this glorious planet is hardly to be discerned, but in rising and setting of it; at noon, when it is at the height, it seems to be at a stay, as if it were there to stand still, as it did upon Gibeon. The like may be observed in the course and progress of our lives; when we are gotten up to our middle age, which is our meridian, when we are in the strength of our years, we appear to be at a kind of consistency ; not sensible of any motion toward our appointed change ; but in the beginning and ending of our days, we may, without any great difficulty, remark how we gradually rise and set. It is apparent how our infancy grows up from a sensitive, to a rational condition ; and how, by little and little, our reason comes to maturity ; from *speaking as children, understanding as children, and thinking as children*, we become in time men, *and put away childish things*. And so likewise, when *the evil dayes* overtake us, and *the years wherein we have no pleasure*, it

is for the most part easy to observe by what degrees *our shadow goes down*. Lord! I am now near my sun-set, and cannot but plainly see myself hastening to the place of my long home ; my sun, and light, and moon, and stars grow dark, *the clouds return after the rain*, and one infirmity follows upon another ! O let these signs of my approaching night, be as so many tolls of my passing bell, to warn me that my dayes are extinct, and that my grave is ready for me ; that accordingly I make myself ready for my grave, and not suffer myself to fall asleep when I should be fitting myself to go to bed !

With what a full faced, glorious aspect, doth the sun now look upon this inferior world, and in his lowest condition, appear greater than at another time ? It is no otherwise with a noble hearted Christian, who though he be never so low laid in the opinion of the world, yet retaineth an indited countenance, and breaketh through all interpositions, with so much the greater bravery and lustre.

It is a pleasing sight to see the sun in his going down, how he doth not only shew forth his own resplendency to the uttermost, but

many times, out of his abundance, irradiate the clouds about him, and guild, and enamel them with his departing beams. A dying saint is a setting-sun, and in his going down to the grave doth not only shew his own brightness and glory, but often communicates the divine tincture thereof to all about him, and gives them occasion by the light thereof, *to glorifie their Father which is in heaven.* Let the foolish world adore the rising sun, God grant I may set clear, and by my dying example illustrate others, and thereby induce them to praise him! *Better is the end of a thing than the beginning, and the day of death, than the day of birth.*

But let the sun set never so clear, we see it many times followed by mists, and noisome vapours, (the ancient Persians sent their imprecations and curses after it.) There is no person so innocent, but when he is laid in his grave, may have his memory bemisted, as it were, and clouded by the stinking vapours of malice, and envy. Our Saviour himself, that *Sun of Righteousness*, was no sooner set, though with so much glory, that the beholders, even his enemies, acknowledged him to be *the Son of*

*God, but the chief priests and pharisees endeavoured to cover his sacred name with darkness, aspersing him as a deceiver, and bribing the guards to belie his resurrection : if they have done these things in the green tree, what can the drie expect ? the disciple is not above his Master ; and the charities of the world are still the same.*

It is a sad thing to have a guilty soul : this sun-set, which otherwise I might behold with comfort, as putting me in mind of the approaching time of my rest, is to me an exprobation ; at once remembering me of the command, not to suffer *the sun to go down upon my wrath* ; and condemning me for suffering so many suns to go down in my passion. O my God ! if thou shouldst deal with me according to my deserts, in what a cloud should I set ! But thy goodness shines in my wickedness. O let the brightness thereof dispel and scatter those clouds that are in my perverse nature ! and then, although the days of my life have been frequently overcast by my exorbitant passions, I shall hope in this evening of it, to go down in the serenity of thy mercy, and to set in thy love !

But what do I speak of rising, and going down, as if the sun went higher or lower, at one time then another, and were subject to excentrick motions? That glorious luminary, however it appears unto us, is constant to one and the same road; and is as high at night, as it is at noon, or morning. It is so with a mind well trained, and exercised in virtue, and piety; which although, as to outward things, it may appear subject to variations, now and then abased, now and then abounding; yet in itself, it is above all sublunary changes, neither elated nor dejected, and keepeth an even course, in a constant equi-distance from earth, and all earthly things. Lord! give me that mind, that whatever my state and condition be, I may keep still at one and the same height, and in a regular motion; that in all mutations I may be one, and the same man: So shall I be happy in my conformity to thee, *who art ever the same, without shadow of change!*

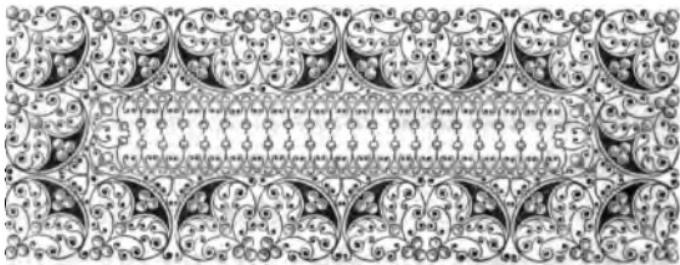
But the sun is set, and how soon are all things benighted with it! What are all the comforts of this world, when the light of God's countenance is withdrawn? *When thou, O Lord! hidest thy face, it is no marvel if we be*

troubled. As thy light is a rejoicing to us, so the privation of it, is at once both uncomfortable and dangerous: thou *makest darkness, and it is night, wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth*: in a spiritual sense, when it is night within us, all our lusts and corruptions are in motion, and that roaring lion that seeks to devour us, is most stirring and active: *darkness, and cruel habitations go together*. O Thou who art the true light of the world! and whom no darkness can comprehend; enlighten my darkness! be my sun, and I shall have no need of this sun! be my shield, and I shall *fear no danger*! I shall be at once safe and happy!

If the sun, when it sets, should bid us good night for all, what a sad world would there be at his departure? Now we are not troubled at it, because we know it will rise again. It should be no otherwise with us upon the departure of godly friends and relations. Why should we grieve so immoderately, many times, for them, *as if we had no hope*, when we know that they shall as surely *rise again at the last day*, as the sun shall arise the next morning? We have the assurance of God's own word for

it, that if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so those also which sleep in Jesus he will bring with him ; and that, with this further advantage to them, that they shall then appear in glory, and shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father, never to set more. What would we have more ? Lord ! teach us to comfort one another with these words !

It is observed that a clear evening, is for the most part, a forerunner of a fair morning ; especially if, as our Saviour himself hath told us, *the skie be red*. O my God ! grant that at my last end, I may leave a clear memory behind me, and discern a red skie over me, tinctured with his most precious blood ; and it shall be a prognostick to me of an everlastingly happy good Morrow !



## MEDITAT. XXII.

UPON MY LYING DOWN TO REST.

METHINKS, I have had a long dayes  
journey in the world, and a wearisome ;  
accompanied with blustering weather, and  
rugged ill ways ; and now, a bed would do  
well : *there is a time to every purpose under  
heaven ; a time to travel, and a time to rest ;  
a time to wake, and a time to sleep ; a time  
to be born, and a time to die* ; the longest day  
hath a night, and the longest life, a death ; the  
one is the emblem of the other : those fathers  
before the flood, Adam, Jared, Methusalem,  
that made nothing of a journey of nine hundred  
years and upwards, had their bed time, as  
well as their rising ; and after their reckoning  
of so many ages, what do we read of them,  
but that they died, and they died, and they

died? Thus is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to heart! It is late, and I cannot but confess I am tired, and my bones would gladly be at rest; yet such is my infirmity, that when death is ready to come in, to help me to bed, I am startled, and more willing to sit up, and keep him out of doors, like Jehoram's messenger, than to be troubled with such an attendance. O my soul! what is the matter? it is for children to apprehend bull-beggars, and to be afraid to lie to sleep in the dark: be not frightened with a name. Death is no more the thing he was; the king of fear is departed. Death is dead, as to any hurt it can do thee; and yet I may say, so far alive, as to serve thee: he is thine, without any more tergiversations. Therefore, O my soul! prepare thyself for thy last rest; and in order thereunto, acquaint thyself with this pale complexioned servant before hand, that his face may not be strange unto thee. We do not affect to have strangers about us, to help us off with our clothes, but such as we know well. Accustom thyself to entertain communication with him; go down to the potter's house, as God commanded the prophet; that is, as some

expositors say, descend to the consideration of mortality ; and so live to day, as if thou wert to be taken from me to night ; so shall death never be a surprise to thee, but whensoever he comes, he shall find thee ready for him. That person is in a sad condition, that looks for death, and cannot find it ; but he is in a sadder, whom death finds before he looks for it.

The way to sleep well at night, is to exercise well in the day : the sleep of a labouring man is sweet, saith the preacher. Death is but a long sleep ; and if we would hereafter *rest* with happiness *from our labours*, we must so labour here, that *our works may follow us* hereafter : if we *so sleep, we shall do well !*

We are not troubled when we lie down to take our natural rest, upon the confidence we have in God's ordinary providence, that he will raise us up again ; why should Christians, that do, or should know the Scriptures and the power of God, be more anxious and doubtful of their eternal, than of their natural rest ? This is nothing but our infidelity ; for upon a true account there is more uncertainty of our waking out of our beds, than there is of our rising out of our graves. None can tell

when he lies down, whether he shall see any to-morrow in this world, or *rise no more till the heavens be no more*; but as to our resurrection, we are already so far raised, as *Christ our head is risen, who is our resurrection, and our life. Lord increase our faith!*

But what is it troubles us? is it the thought, that we shall live no longer? We may as well lament that we were born no sooner; it is but a measuring cast, between the time when we were not, and the time when we shall not be; one is as inconsiderable as the other. If it be a matter of sorrow to think that we are mortal, it may be a just cause of rejoicing to consider that we are so near being immortal. It was, as some hold, the mercy of God, after our first parents had eaten of the forbidden fruit, and thereby made themselves and their posterity miserable, to prevent them that they should not eat of the tree of life; for then both they, and we, had been everlasting miserable. Mortality is a mercy!

But possibly it is not death, but dying, that which the philosopher calls, the pomp of death, that is so much apprehended. The pangs and convulsions of death have a horrid aspect.

Certainly in those things, we do many times but fright ourselves with our own fancies ; for when we think those agonies insupportable, nature is spent, and often sensless. But admitting the worst ; as our desire to sleep makes us bear with some tossings, and tumblings, and disquietings, before we can well settle to rest ; so should our *desire to depart, and to sleep in Jesus*, prevail with us to endure those sufferings which are but *for a moment*, but are followed with a quiet happy rest, in the bosom of our Saviour, to all eternity.

But it is a dismal thing to flesh and blood, to think that after death, we must lie rotting and corrupting in a dark silent grave ; and that when we are reduced to dust, as we were grass, when we lived, in regard of our frailty, so we may come to be grass again after we are dead, in a literal sense, and so pass away into several other substances. This, I confess, might justifie some melancholy thoughts, *if we had no hope*. But when we are taught of God, that after this life ended, our *spirit shall return unto God who gave it* : and that after this world ended, our dust shall be raised again, and recompacted into a *glorious body clothed*

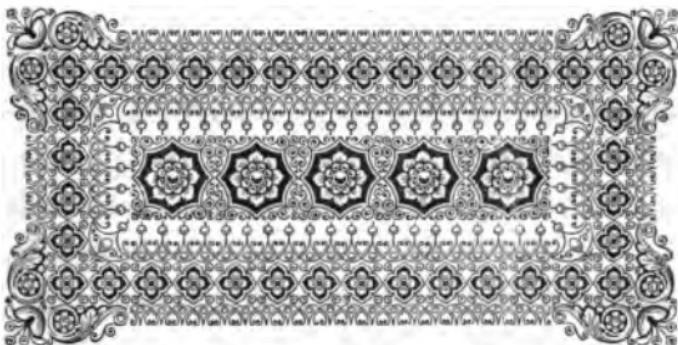
*with immortality, and honour, and reunited to our soul; both to be for ever with the Lord; we may bid defiance both to death, and the grave. O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?*

But what needs all this perswasion? is it in our choice, whether to die, or not? If we must die, as die we must, it is a perfect folly to be unwilling to do that which of necessity we must do, whether we will, or not. Take courage then, O my soul! and act thy last part handsomely: it is a degree toward dying well, to be willing to die!

But I am dead; what do I talk of dying, or the fear of dying? my whole life, is but a continued death. I have more reason to be apprehensive of my living, than of my dying; for I can never hope to live, till I die; that which we call death, being in truth, but the dying day of our death, and the birth-day of our everlasting life.

Nay, I am not only dead, but in a great part buried: how much of myself, is already laid in the dust? Death hath taken three of my ribs from me, and so many of my limbs, as I have lost children by his stroke. My dearest relations

are gone to bed before me ; to what purpose serves this fragment, this remainder of me here ? Lord, take all to thee ! Let me not lie half in the bed, and half out. Thy bed is not too little, nor thy coverlet too narrow, but thou hast room enough for me : Receive me, I humbly beseech thee, as thine ! *I am thine, O save me ! Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace !* In thy name, I lay me down to rest.



## A Daily D I R E C T O R Y.

EVERY day is a life in little; in the account whereof, we may reckon our growth from the womb of the morning; our growth, from thence to noon, when we are as the sun in his strength; after which, like a shaddow that declineth, we hasten to the evening of our age, and so to our sun-set, when we come to close our eyes in sleep, the image and representative of death. Our whole life, is but this tale of a day told over and over. I would therefore so spend every day, as if it were all the days I had to live; and in pursuance of

this resolution, I would, by the assistance of divine grace, endeavour to observe this following daily practise.

1. I would awake with God, as early as I could. David hath a high expression for this, *In the morning shall my prayer prevent thee*; as if he meant to be up first. But to speak in a stile, that may befit such a worme as I am; whensoever I awake, I would willingly have my mouth prevent mine eyes, and open first, to shew forth his praise; that so God may awake for me, and make the habitation of my righteousness prosperous. To this end, I would be careful to ly down the night before in the peace of God, who hath promised that his commandment shall keep me when I sleep, and talk with me when I awake; otherwise I may justly fear, that those corruptions that bid me last good night, may be ready to bid me first good morrow.

2. I would arise as early as I could, that course being most profitable both for soul, body, and estate. In summer time, I would be up by five; in winter, by six or soon after, as my health would permit, and if nothing

*Psal. lxxxviii. 13.*

intervene of necessity to hinder me. However, by God's grace, it should be mine endeavour to perserve my bed and heart undefiled, and to yield as little as might be to the foulding of the hands.

3. I would make myself ready as quickly as I could, with a special care, while I were dressing my body, not to neglect the adorning of my soul, but to be sure to keep that in a graceful fashion ; in order whereunto I would endeavour, in that time, to call to mind, by some ejaculatory meditations, the benefit of putting on the Lord Jesus ; the advantage of being furnished with the Spiritual Panoply ; the armour of light, and of righteousness, on the right hand, and on the left ; and the bravery of wearing a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God himself is of a great price.

4. I would pray with my wife, if I omitted to do it before I rose ; and together with the confession of our sins, acknowledg the mercy of God to us both, in bringing us together, and in conjoyning not only our hands by his ordinance, but our hearts and affections by the sacred bond of his love ; and implore the

*Rom. xiii. 14. Eph. vi. 11. Rom. xiii. 12. 2 Cor. vi. 7. 1 Pet. iii. 1.*

sanctification of our condition, that this happy union might continue without any further provocations between us, than to love, and good works ; or other contention, than that between the vine and the olive, which of us should bring forth the best fruit.

5. So soon as I went out of my chamber, I would retire into my closet, and there lift up my heart with my hands, as an heave-offering to God, in private prayer : and although I would not absolutely limit myself here into one place more than to another ; yet I would perform that duty there, as constantly as I could, because I have found there is something in the place, that makes impression upon the memory ; and my thoughts are easier recollected, and come in sooner, where they have been formerly accustomed to a call.

6. In prayer, whether with my wife, or alone, I would labour to stir up all that is within me ; first to an awful, reverent apprehension of the majesty, power, wisdom, and goodness of God ; and secondly, to a care, not to utter<sup>1</sup> hastily any thing before him ; not to use vain<sup>2</sup> repetitions ; and not to ask<sup>3</sup>

(1) *Eccles.* v. 2. (2) *Matth.* vi. 7. (3) *Jam.* iv. 3.

amiss; but to adopt, and sute my<sup>1</sup> requests to his will; and that in as few words as conveniently might be,<sup>2</sup> considering *that He is in heaven, and I upon earth*. But yet I would not so contract myself, as to make an end before I had done; but so continue in prayer, and watch in the same, till I find mine affections thoroughly warmed, and quickened. For encouragement to this perseverance without fainting, I would indeavour to make use of these, or such like considerations: As first, that I pray to a God hearing prayer, unto whom all flesh should come; a God, that heareth, when none else can hear; when the children, the departed saints are in bed with him, and asleep, ignorant of our condition; That heareth, when none else will hear; at midnight, in the darkest time of our condition; and is willing to be importuned, and to have no rest given him; That heareth while we are yet speaking, and is ready to answer before we can call; That is so willing to open the door, when we knock, that he hath made himself the door to give us admission. Secondly,

(1) 1 Joh. xv. 14. (2) Eccles. v. 2.

Psal. cxv. 2. Luke xi. 3. Isaiah cxlii. 26. Luke xi. 5, 6, 7, 8.

that I pray unto a God, that commandeth us to pray unto him in time of trouble ; and, if I may speak it with humble reverence, prayeth us to pray unto him, and is delighted with our voice. And thirdly, that this God is, The Father, and in Christ Jesus my Father, that knows better than I myself, what I stand in need of before I ask him, and is able to do exceedingly abundantly, above all that I can either ask or think. The Son, who is not ashamed to call me brother ; my Mediator, and Advocate, who ever lives to make intercession for me. The Spirit, and my Comforter, who helpeth mine infirmities, when I know not what I should pray for, as I ought. Lastly, that I have a promise from this good God, to be heard in what I ask according to his will, which should sufficiently imboden me to come unto the throne of grace ; his hearing being a granting, either of what I pray for ; or of what is enough for me.

7. I would make it my first study, to read some portion of the Holy Scripture, both begining and ending it, with some short prayer

*Isaiah vi. 7.    Isaiah cxv. 24.    John x. 9.    Psal. c. 15.  
Cantic. ii. 14.    Math. vi. 8.    Ephes. iii. 20.    Hebr. ii. 11.  
Hebr. vii. 25.    Rom. viii. 26.    1 John v. 14.*

to God for his blessing upon it, that it might be of edification to me : That my reading of it might, according to that advice of<sup>1</sup> Isaiah, for the hearing of it, not only serve for the present, but be of use for the time to come, as a rule and canon of righteousness unto me, in the course and practise of my life.

8. I would walk half an hour, and intertaine myself with as good thoughts as I could ; that whilst my body were in exercise, my mind might neither be idle nor misemploied.

9. The time intercurrent between this and noon, I would give either to study, or to buisiness, or to company ; but if I could choose, the most of it to study ; which is the improvement of time.

10. Because in reading,<sup>2</sup> as in making many books, there is no end ; and much study is a weariness of the flesh ; I would especially apply myself to the knowledge of divinity, as that which most directly tendeth to the cleansing of the inside of the cup ; and leadeth me to the observation of my Saviour's rule, *to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness* ; which is the beginning of wisdom,

(1) *Isaiah iv. 23.*

(2) *Eccles. xii. 12.*

and the end and conclusion of the whole matter. But yet, I would not altogether lay by the study of morality, but labour to make use of it in a sanctified way ; and so, as that learning should still be subservient to the study and practice of piety ; the eyes of the maiden should look unto the hand of the mistress.

11. After a convenient time spent in my closet, I would, if I had a special calling, apply myself unto that which St. Paul termeth, the doing of ones own business, and I would be diligent in the pursuance of it : no day, so far as I had liberty, should pass without a line. But however, in the want of such a calling, I would be constant to that general calling which I have taken upon me, and wherein I would be a law unto myself, which is, according to St. Paul's iunction, to do good as I had opportunity, unto all, but especially unto those who are of the household of faith. This I would have to be the decretal end, as Seneca phraseth it, the bent and aim of my whole life, whereunto all mine undertakings should collinate : without such a design as this, men live they know not why ; they live by fits and snatches, and according to particular accidents ;

but as to their general, and main course, without any certain purpose at all ; their lives are made up of shreds and fragments, and there can be no continuity, nor suitableness in their actions, because they are not of a whole piece, nor all of the same stuff. I would therefore make it my daily business, in all conditions, whether in my special or general calling, to be one and the same man in well doing.

12. I would constantly observe to have prayers at noon with my family, and to be present myself at the duty ; and that, both for mine own comfort, and for example to my servants ; who are then most likely to be wrought upon, and made such as I desire, when I shew myself to be such as I desire to make them. I look upon the example of<sup>1</sup> Abraham, as in this particular sufficient to turn all masters of families into examples : what he commanded his household to do in the service of God, that he first of all performed<sup>2</sup> himself ; and therefore as I desire the blessing of Abraham upon my children and family, so it should be my care, both to order them to keep the way of the Lord, and by

(1) *Gen. xiii. 19.*

(2) *Gen. xvii. 6—27.*

mine own example to guide them into that way, which I would have them keep.

13. At meals, I would observe a moderation; a mean between eating by the ounce, and by the pound; a sober competent enough, is the best diet. He that exceeds that, makes his table a snare. In an especial manner, I would avoid drinking, further than for the satisfaction of nature; for of all sins, that is the most beastial. Indeed I wrong the beasts when I say so, for most beasts are sober; but what a pitiful creature is a brutish man, a man sunk beneath his species? It is no hyperbole to say, that drunkenness is all sins, in the complication of it, so that it is a difficult matter to be simply drunk, and no more; to be drunk, and to be guilty of no more than being drunk. Let the jolly good fellowes of the world deride this as a morose, and, it may be, a nice precise humour, I would have them know, that I scorn to make myself a beast in a civility, for any man's pleasure. That is the worst good manners in the world.

14. I would in the choice of my company, wherever I were, associate, if I could, with those only, that went mine own way, as I

would do when I went a journey ; all my delight should be in the saints,<sup>1</sup> who are the only excellent ones. But yet because it is impossible, altogether to avoide the meeting with vain, or vicious<sup>2</sup> persons (for then I must needs go out of the world) I would in mine ordinary conversation, labour to observe these rules.

1. According to the direction of the<sup>3</sup> apostle, to keep a resolved settled distance with those people that are called brethren, and are but nominals ; those that look one way in their profession, and row another way in their<sup>4</sup> practise ; and with such spots in feasts and meetings, nor to commaculate myself, by keeping them company, or by<sup>5</sup> eating with them willingly.

2. To avoid, as much as I could, the society of vain, as well as of scandalous company ; and if I could not do that, yet to stay as little as might be with them ; for that at the best, they do but in a civil kind of felony, rob a man of his time.

3. In case I were necessitated to be in ill company, then to observe their miscarriages,

(1) *Psal. xvi. 3.*      (2) *1 Cor. v. 10.*      (3) *1 Cor. v. 11.*  
(4) *Jude 12.*      (5) *1 Cor. v. 11.*

but this, not to deride them, and to make a jest of them, for he that doth that, doth but rejoice in the Devil's victories ; but to avoid them, and from their evil examples to gather good instruction, as the<sup>1</sup> wise man, when he went by the field of the slothful, became the wiser by remarking his sloth. It is no paradox to say, that wise men learn more from fools than fools learn from wise men.

4. To make profit of the abilities, and parts of those that are persons of understanding, as I should have opportunity in their company, if they were such as I might be free with, by leading them on to discourse, and by putting questions unto them whereby to provoke them to shew where their strength lay, as we put water into a pump, to make water come ; which would be at once a civility to them, in giving them opportunity to make demonstration of their worth, and a benefit to myself, whereby I might receive instruction.

12. In reference to the right ordering of myself in company, I would set as strict a watch, as I could, upon my thoughts, words and actions.

(1) *Prov. xxiv. 30—32.*

1. Upon my thoughts, that they might be free from impiety, pride, covetousness wrath, impurity, and vanity. To which end, I would study to keep my heart with all possible diligence. 1. By possessing it with a deep and awful apprehension of the majesty, holiness, omnipresence, and omniscience of God; the sense whereof was that<sup>1</sup> which principally secured Job from exorbitant fancies. 2. By directing, and fixing it upon the love of the law of God;<sup>2</sup> O how love I thy law, saith David, it is my meditation all the day. Where the love is settled, there the thoughts will be amused and busied; as where the carcase is, there the eagles will be gathered together. 3. By inuring myself to frequent and fervent ejaculations unto God, that the meditations of my heart might be acceptable in his sight; and this was a piece of David's method too. 4. And lastly by committing my way to God, according to Solomon's direction, that my thoughts might be established: and though I knew I could never keep the door so close shut, but that some wicked, and vain imaginations would be crowding in upon me, yet,

(1) *Job* xiii. 4.(2) *Psal.* cxix. 37.

however, by the assistance of divine grace, I would make it my work, to use them like vagrants, and to whip them out again. Those sparrows and swallows, might keep a fluttering about me, but they should never be willingly admitted by me to house, and to nestle, and to lay near God's altar in my heart.

2. I would set a guard upon the door of my lips, that I might not sin in my words; for in the multitude of words, there cannot want sin. The talking Devil is of more danger, than the dumb Devil, and therefore I had rather at any time be put to repent the saying too little, than the saying too much; for I could remedy the one, but not the other. That which is not spoken may in good time be uttered, but that which is once uttered, cannot be unspoken. According to this caution, I would be careful not to offend. 1. By atheistical speeches, words cloathed with death, as Syracides rightly termeth them; tending to the contempt of God, and of religion, and devotion, and to the profanation of his name; all which kind of expressions may justly be reckoned among the unfruitful works of darkness, as bringing forth

nothing either of profit or pleasure to those that affect them. 2. By using slanderous, defamatory words, which commonly are repaid again in the same coin ; and therefore he that will take the freedom to talk of others, what he pleases, must be contented many times to hear that from others which pleases him not. This venome may be vented, either a malicious whispering way, the which is many times more penetrative than that which is delivered in a public manner, as a wind at a window may do one more hurt than in the air ; or in a jesting way, which is a casting of firebrands, arrows, and death in sport, as Solomon expresseth it ; or under a mask of friendship, commanding a man with a *but* that shall be sure to spoil all the commendation ; or with a pretended pity, that such a one should be so and so ; or as not believing the report, which we would have believed : such tongues as these are worse than dog's tongues, for they are healing, these wounding. To avoid this baseness, I would not only look to my tongue, but to mine ears ; there may be a slander in hearing, and listening, as well as in speaking. I would not make talebearers by listening to

misreports ; the receiver makes the thief : if the master hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked, and will take the wind of him : so saith<sup>1</sup> Solomon. But such masters are seldom wise, and such servants seldom honest. Midas his ears shewed what he was. 3. By taking a liberty to speak obscenely, which the apostle calleth corrupt communication ; and there is a contagion in it, corrupting, or at the best, offending the hearers. 4. By using words of heat and provocation in argument, or other discourse with any ; for passion will never convert reason. In such a case, when I met with that distemper in others, or found it in myself, I would not heap wood on the fire, by contesting, but either divert the discourse, or end it in silence. The best way to keep the peace, is to hold one's peace. But this will not be so handsomly done, if it be not done at first, and before the discourse grow too warme;<sup>2</sup> as the opening of a watercourse is better stopt in the beginning, before it have gained too much passage, than when it hath blown up the flood-gates, and overthrown the banks.

(1) *Prov. xxix. 12.*(2) *Prov. xvii. 14.*

For prevention of the worst, I would be wary not to be too positive, or peremptory in mine own opinion, but to deliver my sense with a submission to better reason, and with a willingness to be better informed; which was noted to have been Socrates' way in argumentation, and whereby he gained so much upon others and brought them to a concurrence with him; under the notion of one that desired to find out the truth, and to be satisfied in it, but not as imposing his own opinions upon any in a magisterial way. 5. By uttering untruths; by false speaking; than which there can be nothing imagined more servile and base. It is a quality befitting none, but such as go in fear of a rod, or a cudgel; children, or cowards; and therefore one cannot be too wary in avoiding it. In order to that end, I would be careful in my discourse, to keep to the plain rode way of truth; and to be clear, and moderate in mine expressions. I would not affect telling wonders: I would neither tell such truths willingly, as in their incredibility might resemble lies; nor tell such lies, as in their probability might resemble truths. Whatever I said, though possibly I might from

the report of others, tell that which were a lie; yet I would be sure not to lie, by telling that for a truth, which I knew to be a lie. I would speak the truth in my heart.<sup>1</sup> He that believes himself in what he says, never lies.

6. By unadvised promises to any person, much more by any rash vows to God, least in keeping them, I might insnare myself; or in violating them injure others, and sin against God. He that promises more than he is able to preform, is a vaine weak man; he that promises more than he means to perform, is a false unworthy man. The word of a person of honour should be led by his thought, and followed by his deed. Above all, there is no dallying with God, in what we have promised, or vowed to him. He hath no pleasure in fools;<sup>2</sup> such as after vowes make inquiry.<sup>3</sup> It is not enough for one to say, it was an error, and then, as upon better advisement, to vow, not to perform his vow,<sup>4</sup> as that heathen did. God will not be mockt. He expects indelaid painment. I would therefore be cautious before hand how I bound my soul with any such

(1) *Psal. xv. 2.*(2) *Eccles. v. 4—6.*(3) *Prov. xx. 25.*(4) *Plut. in Lacon.*

bond, but having once taken the obligation upon me, I would by all lawful means, and with as much speed as I could, resolve, and endeavour to perform it. 7. By ostentation, and bragging of any thing done or to be done by me; for this vanity is most tedious to the company, and in spiritual matters, odious to God. It is offensive to others, who, for the most part, are lovers of themselves too, and apt to look upon it as a diminution to their worth, to hear another so exalt and proclaim his own; and it is a sin against God, to rob him of his honour and glory, by idolizing ourselves, and sacrificing to our own parts and abilities, when we have nothing but what we have received from his Divine beneficence. If therefore through the grace of God actuating my weakness, I had, or might have done any thing in any measure commendable, I would according to Solomon's advice,<sup>1</sup> let another man extol it, and not mine own mouth. He is hard put to it, that must be fain to be his own trumpeter. There is no greater sign of emptiness than for a man to be full of himself.  
8. By unadvised disclosing of matters of

(1) *Prov. xxvii. 2.*

secrecy, whether concerning myself, or my friend, or the public. He that suffers for that fatality, can justly blame none but himself; for why should another man be tied to keep his counsel, that could not keep his own?

9. By taking a freedom to chide in my family in a violent passionate way, and with unseemly expressions.<sup>1</sup> So did not Job, and so would not I: for every master, hath a Master in heaven,<sup>2</sup> with whom there is no respect of persons: from the highest to the lowest, all are in the same relation, fellow-servants unto Him. He that made me, made them, and nothing but his free grace put the distinction between us; without which, I might have held a trencher to them, as well as they to me. I would therefore so use them, as I would be used by them, if I were in their quality. My endeavour should be to give them that which were just and equal; to take care of them upon all occasions; to shew myself affable to them,<sup>3</sup> forbearing threatening and harshness; and by that carriage to oblige them to be, not only faithful servants to me, but according to Seneca's phrase,<sup>4</sup> humble friends. But in case

(1) *Job.* xxxi. 13. (2) *Ephes.* vi. 9. (3) *Ephes.* vi. 9. (2) *Sen. Ep.* 47.

I should find myself necessitated to take notice of faults, and to express a sharpness upon it, as sometimes, and too often, there might be occasion for it, (which if I should not be sensible of, I might quickly be servant-ridden, and reduced to that proverbial condition of the Major of Senegalia in Italy, to command, and do it myself,) I would be careful to bridle my passion so, as that it might not run away with me, but that I might be able to manage it, and to keep it within the ring and compass of these considerations. 1. I would shew a present sense of any dishonor offered to God, either by profane speeches, or wicked actions, with a further allowance to myself to chide in this case, than in any else, both as the concernment is higher, and as I might with more safety trust my dull heavy affections from mounting too fast upward: But then I would intermingle mine anger with grief, as our Saviour did,<sup>1</sup> for the hardness of their hearts that had so offended, and endeavour to convince them of their sin, and to reduce them to repentance. 2. I would not discover mine anger too often, or upon light occasions, for

(1) *Mark* iii. 5.

that, like the frequent and ordinary giving of hot water, would abate the operation of it, and at last render it ineffectual, and despicable. 3. I would not chide the air, when my servant had misdemeaned himself, but fix the blame upon the person, and that, as Paul rebuked Peter to his face: <sup>1</sup> for to make a clamour against any behind their backs, and to say nothing to them when they come in presence, would be but a disturbance to myself, a jest to those that should have the reproof, and an emendation to no body. 4. I would be moderate in chiding, whensoever I were put to it. He that goes beyond that measure, deserves to be chidden himself; as Plutarch was justly told his own, and reproached as a person not worthy to be called a philosopher, for that having written so much against anger, he himself gave so much way unto it against his servant. 5. I would be careful not to retaine mine anger too long, least it should grow sower; there may be a passant anger in a wise man, <sup>2</sup> but we know in whose bosome it resteth. 6. I would avoid occasions of anger, and not be too curious, and inquisitive after

(1) *Gal.* ii. 11.(2) *Eccles.* vii. 9.

all words that are spoken, least I should hear my servant curse me ;<sup>1</sup> and therefore if my servant would not amend by fair means, I would resolve to part with him, rather than to keep him, to the hazard of my making myself the worse by my passion, because he would not be bettered by my reason. Lastly, if at any time I should find myself transported to sin in this way, I would labour to be humbled for it, and to be angry with my sin, which is the right way to be angry without sin.

3. I would take heed unto mine actions :  
1. Not to do any thing that might give occasion of scandal, whereby I should at once dishonor God, open the mouths of the wicked to blasphemie, grieve the spirits of good people, and wound mine own conscience. I like not the humour of those that despise a bad fame, for none do that so much as those that despise the vertues that produce a good fame : and this shewes worst in those that are greatest, as the scandals they give are more exemplary than others ; for the faults of great men can never be small. But there is a twofold scandal ; the one real, the other imaginary, and in appearance

(1) *Eccles.* vii. 21.

only : I would if I could, avoid both ; but it should be with more solicitude for the one, than the other. For the first, I hope I should as soon choose to dive into the bottom of the sea with a mill-stone about my neck, as in a real way be guilty of it, as to the scandalizing of the least of Christ's little ones ; but for the other, which I reckon an offence taken, and not given, such as is grounded upon unsound and depraved opinions about things indifferent or impertinent, I would not asservile myself to any men's fancies and chymeras, and I know not what dominations and spirits of the air ; but either give a rational satisfaction for what I did, or if that would not be taken for good payment, acquiesce in the satisfaction of mine own conscience, and stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made me free. I had rather never have been born, than that it should be said of me, that I had committed murder, or adultery, or felony ; but if any should charge me with preciseness, or fanaticism, for not going to a play, or a tavern, or for not using that freedom and liberty in my discourse and conversation that others did, I should be so far from being troubled at it, that it should be

a comfort to me to be found guilty of such innocent scandals. I would be wary not to give the men of the world advantage to tax me in the course of my life with any thing of dishonor; but if all the occasion they could find against me, were but concerning the law of my God, and my devotion to his service, I hope I should never shut the window for it. I would therefore make it my care and constant endeavour, to provide that whatsoever I did, might not only be good but of good report, and honest in the sight of honest and good men; that my good might not be evil spoken of by them. But for those that are without; I shall say no more. 2. I would be careful, as to do good, so to do that good in a good manner, which is to do it well; for a thing done, may be good in the substance of the work, and yet vitiated in the manner of the doing of it. Cain and Abel, the Pharisee and the Publican performed, both the one and the other, the same duties; but with so much difference in the manner of their performance, that God had respect unto the one, and not unto the other; he justified the one, and rejected the other. For my better direction

herein, I would endeavour. 1. To be good; for as things be, so they operate;<sup>1</sup> every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; and therein I should be conform to the nature of God himself, whose character it is,<sup>2</sup> to be good, and to do good. 2. Not to rest upon a moral goodness, but upon mine implantation in Jesus Christ,<sup>3</sup> and to bring forth fruit in him. 3. In doing good, to make use of none but good means; I would not do a wrong to do a right;<sup>4</sup> God hates robbery for burnt-offering. 4. To place the good I would do, upon a right object; upon those that want, and not upon those that have enough. What is poured into a full vessel is so much spilt;<sup>5</sup> and therefore Solomon putteth that which is given to the rich, into an equal scale with that which is taken from the poor, with a severe denunciation of poverty against those that do it. 5. To do the good I did, for good ends. It is the end, that denominates, and qualifies, and crowns the action. They that do good for evil ends, and they that do evil that good may ensue, are both evil whilst they do good. 3. I would not do that

(1) *Math.* vii. 17. (2) *Psal.* cxix. 68. (3) *Job* xv. v.  
(4) *Isay.* lxi. 8. (5) *Prov.* xxi. 16.

to another, which I would not have done to myself or mine ; but I would admeasure mine actions by the rule of my blessed Saviour in that particular, and make that my standard.

4. I would not be a buisy body in affecting multiplicity of engagements, and the having many irons in the fire at once, for that kind of pragmatical understanding seldom effects any thing to the purpose, and is no better than a buisy doing nothing. Neither would I intrude myself into other folkes matters, when I had no call nor power to do good ; yet not forgetting God's command,<sup>1</sup> not to hate my brother, but in any wise to rebuke him, and not to suffer sin upon him ; or as it is in the margent, that thou bear not sin for him. In God's account, he is interpreted to hate his brother, that doth not rebuke him, and his suffering his sin upon him, is reputed a taking of it upon himself : but then, this must be done with great tenderness, and in the spirit of meekness ; in the spirit of the dove that kisses, when it bills and seems to bite. Gentle reprobations make deepest impressions ; like the snow that falls soft, and yet soaks and penetrates to the root. 5. I

(1) *Levit. xix. 17.*

would not intangle myself in too many friendships ; for there is a kind of incontinency in it, and a man doth but prostitute himself thereby, and make himself common.<sup>1</sup> In this case Solomon's council is good, withdraw thyself from thy neighbour's house ; or, as some read it, out of the original, instead of withdraw, make thyself precious : that is, make thyself valuable, do not wear out every man's threshold, by obtruding thyself upon them ; do not make thyself vulgar and cheap ; for thereby, a man doth but imbase himself, as a mean commodity, that is every bodies money. I would hold a fair civility with as many as I could,<sup>2</sup> but, according to the advice of Syracides, I would have but one counsellor of a thousand.

6. As I would not affect a multitude,<sup>3</sup> or, as Seneca calls it, a people of friends, so I would be very wary how I received any into that number, without weighing and trying them, as I would do gold. I like not those friendships that are begun in a parlour, and concluded in the cellar. He that closeth overhastily with a friend, before he hath eaten a good deal of salt with him, and had sufficient proof of his piety,

(1) *Prov. v. 17.* (2) *Eul. 6. 6.* (3) *Sen. de benef. 1. 6. c. 33.*

fidelity, and ability, may quickly come to take the name of friend in vain. 7. I would not captivate myself to any man's friendship, so as to render myself obnoxious unto him, whereby it might be in his power to ruin me, if he should prove false; but I would so govern my carriage, if I could, as neither to trust too far, nor to seem to mistrust at all. He that shews that he doubts his friend, teaches his friend to doubt him. It is a safe, and, with the allowance of some graines, no ill advice, so to look upon a friend, as one that may become an enemy, and so to look upon an enemy, as one that may become a friend. The best way in conversation is the middle way, between ungirt, and straight laced; between a confidence, and a diffidence; an open facility, and a close reservation. But in case of suspicion, I should think the fairest way to clear it were the openest, that is, to communicate it freely to the party suspected,<sup>1</sup> whereby as it hath been well observed, a man shall both know more of the truth of the business, than he did before; and withal make that party, if he have any ingenuity in him, the more desirous to discharge

(1) *Bacon Ess.*

himself of it, and the more circumspect not to give further cause of jealousy. 8. I would not affect any recreations, or games, but such as were lawful and innocent; unprejudicial to myself, and company; either as to health or estate; without scandal or offence: and those which I did give myself a liberty to use, I would be as moderate in, as in eating, drinking, and sleeping; making use of them for the refreshment and relief of nature, and no further; spending as little time at them as I could, otherwise I should think myself a looser, although I played for nothing.

16. After dinner about an hour, or so soon as might consist with the preservation of my health, I would retire to prayer, with the same cautions above mentioned in reference to that duty.

17. I would return to mine employment, either in study, or business, or entertainment of company, according to the occasion offered; and with the former cautions.

18. Upon all emergencies, I would, as frequently as I could, lift up my heart unto God, either by confession, upon any sensible failing, although but in a sinful thought; or by thanks-

giving upon any accident of welcome importance; or by request, in case of any want wherein I should desire to be relieved.

19. I would carefully observe to have prayers with my family before supper, or in a fit time after, if I should be then diverted from it, by any occasion, or interruption. God requires and expects an evening, as well as a morning sacrifice.

20. At supper, I would endeavour to keep the same watch, both upon mine appetite, and conversation, as at dinner.

21. I would be as careful, as I could with civility, to break up company after supper in a good hour, least sitting up late should make me sleepy, and indispose me to the concluding duties of the day, or inforce me to redeem that time, with the expense of so much time the next morning.

22. Between supper and going to bed, I would be careful to read again somewhat of the Scripture, after the former prescript, as near as possibly I could observe it; and this I would do, to leave my heart with a good relish in it.

23. Before I went to bed, I would constantly

examine myself, and take a view of what I had done in the several passages of the day past, as God did of every thing he had made in the creation, and as far as I were able to recollect myself, I would sum up, how often, and wherein I had offended God in thought, word, or deed; in commission, or omission; through ignorance, or presumption; alone, or in company, or both ways; with an especial eye upon those sins which were most predominant in my corrupt nature. I would observe mine improvements or decayes in grace, what I had gained or lost; and according to the state of mine account, I would make my application to the throne of grace by confession, petition, or thanksgiving. I would with all humbleness confess my sins unto God, in all the particularity I could, and acknowledge my unworthiness of the least of all his mercies, imploring his gracious pardon for what is past, and his preventing grace for the time to come; beseeching him to take an entire possession of me, as his own, though most unworthy, by purchase; and so to preserve me, that there might be nothing in me, but what were his; that there might be no

strong holds of habitual sins held out against him ; nor any presumptuous imaginations exalted in opposition to his saving knowledge ; but that every thought in me might be led captive unto his obedience ; lastly, I would bless and praise him with lips unfained, and with all that were within me for all his mercies renewed, and continued to me from day to day ; and above all for Christ Jesus the mercy of all mercies ; and fountain of all blessing, in whom alone I desired to be found. Thus I would endeavour to wash off the soile of the day, and to make all clean at evening, as under the law.

24. I would reckon that day for lost, wherein I could not give some account to myself, that I had either done, or received some good.

25. When I were in bed, I would not settle to rest, until I had asked my heavenly Father's blessing and laid my head in the bosome of his Son, my gracious Saviour, with an humble recommendation of my body and soul into his hands, by some short ejaculatory prayer. Thus sleeping, and thus awaking, I should hope, that whilst I slept, my heart might be kept awake :

and that when I awaked, I might still be with him, whom my soul loveth.

26. I would have Jesus Christ to be the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and determination of all my purposes and actions. He alone is my wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption; mine only all, and without whom I can do nothing; unto whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, one infinitely glorious God, be all honor and glory, and praise, and adoration for ever and ever, *Amen.*

FINIS.

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